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THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS

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AINSLIEE'S

VOL. XXXIII.

APRIL, 1914.

No. 3.



CHAPTER I.



ANN'S brow was creased by an earnest frown as she ended the review she was writing with the pregnant words:

The author of "Hannah's Honeymoon" is just a very clever child who has by some freak of nature been able to observe life with much of the analytic power of a philosopher, and to write about it with the optimistic inexperience of youth. Mr. Hargraves will go a long way.

She leaned back, reading over the sentence with grave approval; then a sudden, whimsical smile illumined her pretty face, investing it with the natural girlishness of which her task had for the moment robbed it, and she added:

But he should not go alone.

She was smiling still as she laid down the envelope in which she had put the review, but the smile was more thoughtful, reminiscent. Then she rose, took up the book, sat down in an easy-chair, and began to go through it, stopping to read a passage here and there, sometimes with a smile, sometimes shaking her head with a disapproving frown, sometimes pausing to think, a look of tender dreaminess on her pretty face.

At last she closed the book, let it rest

in her lap, and said, half under her breath:

"He must be an awfully nice boy—just too sweet for anything!"

She looked around the room, and her eye fell on a pile of illustrated weeklies on the shelf under the little bamboo tea table. She went to it, brought back the *Bystander* to her easy-chair, and turned the leaves quickly till she came to a portrait underneath which was written:

Edward Hargraves. The Brilliant Young Author of "Hannah's Honeymoon."

Ann looked at the face with the most earnest interest, examining each feature, speculating as to the exact color of the eyes and hair—she could only be sure from the photograph that they were dark—considering the sensitive lips and delicately curved nostrils with peculiar attention. He was undoubtedly a good-looking boy, if the photograph did not lie; but the great charm of the face for Ann was its ascetic quality. It might have been the face of a saint in a picture of some early Italian painter. It appealed to her with extraordinary intensity; she felt that somewhere in the depths of her nature, though she had never known it, was the answering, complementary quality that bound him and her in a curious kinship. She was

inclined to scoff at that hard-driven word "affinity"; yet if there were such things as affinities, well—

"A dear boy—asleep," she said softly; and, with a little blush, she kissed the photograph.

Then she gave herself a shake, sprang to her feet with a ringing laugh, and cried:

"Goodness! What's happened? Ann Anning sentimentalizing! There'll be an earthquake in the Strand!"

She went, laughing softly, to her bedroom; but she picked up "Hannah's Honeymoon," took it with her, and set it on the little shelf beside her bed on which she was used to set the books she read before falling asleep at night.

This was, indeed, a remarkable deviation from habit, for as a rule, after having read and reviewed a novel, Ann bore it to her faithful bookseller, who gave her two shillings for it, and so kept herself in cab fares and gloves. As she put on her hat, she was still thinking of "Hannah's Honeymoon," of its instantaneous, great success, so inexplicable to the superior and priggish critics of the heavier weeklies. It was clear enough to her that for all its occasional crudeness and for all the author's lack of experience of life, it had its full share of the great human appeal. That very lack of experience of life had left him freer to write with the enthusiasm of youth which carries all before it; and behind the enthusiasm she recognized genuine power, a fact that strengthened the appeal to her of the personality she had divined behind the work.

She was not long in putting on her hat; and as she looked at her piquant, almost kittenish face in the glass, she could not help thinking that it would be indeed hard to find a face more exactly the opposite of that of the brilliant young author of "Hannah's Honeymoon." Its blue, smiling eyes and full, kissable lips were indeed a contrast to the dark, dreamy eyes and somewhat austere lips of the photograph.

Since she was taking the review of "Hannah's Honeymoon," along with other reviews and a short article, down

to the office of the *Gadfly*, the weekly journal for which she chiefly wrote, she may be pardoned for letting her thoughts dwell still on its brilliant young author as she walked briskly along. But she came into the outer office with a strictly businesslike air.

Burbage, the office boy, grinned at her with his usual warm approval; Mr. Byles, the cashier, smiled upon her, with an approval no less warm, from his desk. She greeted them cheerfully, inquired after the baby of which Mr. Byles had recently become the excited father, and asked if Mr. Fosbrook was in. He was in; and, having knocked at his door, she entered in answer to an impatient, "Come in!"

He was writing, and, without looking up, he raised a hand in protest against interruption. She sat down quietly in the visitor's chair and watched him. From his shining eyes and exceedingly joyous smile, she gathered that he was writing one of those unamiable paragraphs that, on the one hand, made the *Gadfly* an influence in London, and, on the other, caused the writhing subjects with which they dealt to exhaust the worst depths of their vocabularies.

By the time he had finished the paragraph, Mr. Fosbrook's smile had grown positively honeyed. As he blotted the paper, he said:

"How are you, Miss Anning? That will teach him to be a Glasgow iron-monger!"

Ann gathered that he was speaking of the leader of the opposition in the House of Commons; and she felt sure that the paragraph would, if anything, teach him not to be a Glasgow iron-monger, though it certainly seemed too late to prevent his embarking on that career. But she only said sedately:

"How do you do, Mr. Fosbrook?"

The editor looked at her as if he found her an uncommonly pleasant sight. Then he said:

"Have you any idea why the Tory party, the party of the English gentleman, always has to get some wretched provincial ironmonger to lead it?"

"Not the slightest," replied Ann, smiling at him.

"No more have I. So write me an article on it—about a column and a half, will you?"

"But I don't know anything about politics," Ann objected, laughing.

"All the better. The most interesting articles are always written by intelligent people who know nothing of the subject about which they are writing. They take more care, and they get their imaginations properly to work. Besides, you really understand the fashions; and if you understand them, politics must be an open book to you. Well, a column and a half; and you may be emotional—there!" said Mr. Fosbrook, in the tone of one conferring a great favor.

Ann shrugged her shoulders. The article would take her a long while to write, but she had fallen a victim before to Mr. Fosbrook's passion for novelty of point of view. She only said gloomily:

"You know I'm never emotional."

"Of course not—of course not—not in business. And what have you brought me?"

"The article on 'Partners at Bridge' and some reviews. One of the reviews is a long one—nearly a column. But you told me I was to use my discretion; and, besides, the book's a great success. It's called 'Hannah's Honeymoon.'"

"Um? You're sure it's all right?" asked Mr. Fosbrook, frowning.

"Quite. Of course, it's a woman's book. But it's already a big success; and it's going to be a great deal bigger success."

"Oh, if it's a woman's book, it's all right. We want to give them as much as ever we can. There's enough for men, with politics at the beginning and sport at the end of the paper. I want women to read all the middle of it. Is it by a man or a woman?"

"It's by a man—a young man," said Ann.

"The best women's books always are by a man—a young man," said Mr. Fosbrook firmly. "You don't happen to know whether he's good looking or not?"

"Yes; he is—at least I think so.

There's a photograph of him in the *Bystander*," said Ann; and, to her surprise, and even more to her annoyance, she felt that she was blushing.

Mr. Fosbrook's eyes, which had been regarding her with gentle amiability, suddenly brightened with a very keen shrewdness, and a faint, mocking smile wreathed his lips, as he said:

"Dear, dear! What is this? Has the insensible heart of Miss Anning been touched at last—and by the mere presentment of a young genius?"

"A photograph in the *Bystander*! Would it touch anybody's heart?" Ann asked scornfully; but she felt the flush deepen in her cheeks.

"Yes; yours," said Mr. Fosbrook promptly. "But this is indeed remarkable—most remarkable—after so many assistant editors have sighed in vain."

"Oh, dear, I was afraid you'd got started!" Ann exclaimed sadly.

Mr. Fosbrook kept his eyes on her in an irritating manner, and Ann hoped that she would not begin to fidget under them.

Then he said sharply: "I have it! Instead of writing me an article on the English gentleman's craving to be led by provincial ironmongers, you shall do me an interview with this rising young genius—an interview with photographs. So we shall kill two birds with one stone; the middle of the paper will contain something truly womanly, and we shall at the same time smooth the course of true love."

"Well, I'd much rather do the interview than a silly old political article," said Ann cheerfully, rising. "May I have some more books?"

"Help yourself—help yourself," said Mr. Fosbrook; and he turned his attention to the report of the debate in the House of Commons the night before, which was suggesting the flying paragraphs he was writing.

Ann studied the shelf of books sent in for review with the eye of an expert. She hardly bothered to read the titles; she read first the name of the publisher, then that of the author. She chose four of them and announced:

"I'll take these if I may."

"All right. Get Burbage to enter them in the book. And I say—get them done as soon as you can and some more, too. Blenkinsop has gone off to Scotland, and we shall run short of reviews if we're not careful. I'll look you out half a dozen more important books."

"Thank you," said Ann, greatly pleased.

More important books meant longer reviews and consequently more money. Reviewing was badly paid, but she found it easy work. Moreover, some of the books would be net, in which case her faithful bookseller would pay her two-fifths of the published price of them, instead of one-third.

She bade Mr. Fosbrook good-by, and came out of his office in a considerable elation, for there were days when he had neither articles nor review books for her. But she found that she was most elated by the thought that she had done all that in her lay to boom "Hannah's Honeymoon."

CHAPTER II.

In the outer office Ann gave her books to Burbage that he might tie them up for her. Then, in an eagerness rather keener than usual, she set about arranging an interview with the author of "Hannah's Honeymoon." She rang up the offices of its publishers and asked them to send a photograph of Hargraves to the *Gadfly* for reproduction; then she asked for his address, that she might interview him.

The junior partner, with whom she was conferring, promised to send the photograph at once, and gave her the address—16 Wellington Mansions, Albemarle Street; but he went on to express the gravest doubts as to whether she would succeed in getting an interview with Hargraves, since he had so far refused to be interviewed with unbending resolution.

"Well, I must do my best," said Ann hopefully. "I suppose you'd like him to be interviewed?"

"Of course we should," said the publisher eagerly. "It helps enormously."

"Well, can you give me any pointers?"

Why won't he be interviewed? It isn't swelled head, by any chance?" asked Ann.

"Oh, dear, no; rather the other way about. It's a quite genuine objection. He says he wants to be judged by his work; and he means it."

"That's all very well for him. But what about my poor editor? Is Mr. Hargraves in town?"

"Yes. He was round here this morning. I do hope you'll be able to pull it off. It would be rather a scoop for the *Gadfly*," said the publisher earnestly.

"I'll see what I can do. Good-by," said Ann; and she hung up the receiver.

She was not at all cast down by the publisher's unfavorable report. In the course of her journalistic experience she had come across other celebrities who had shrunk from the interviewer, and she had not failed to relieve the interview of its terrors for them. She certainly would not fail with Edward Hargraves. At the same time, recalling his portrait in the *Bystander*, she did not think that she would have a quite easy task; his chin was certainly on the square side. It would be a matter for steady pressure.

She hesitated as to what step to take first. Since Hargraves was so strongly averse to being interviewed, a sudden descent on him would assuredly be useless. Either he would fly for his life or remain obdurately dumb. It would be best to write and ask him for an interview. Then a thought struck her—he might have a telephone. The commencing author did not as a rule have a telephone, for reasons of economy; but then the commencing author did not as a rule live at such a good and expensive address as Wellington Mansions. She turned over the telephone directory with swift, expert fingers. Sure enough, Edward Hargraves had a telephone; his number was 1911 Regent. The telephone was much better than a letter; one could be so much more persuasive over it.

She rang him up, but the girl at the

exchange declared that she could not get an answer. Plainly Edward Hargraves was out, and it was useless to try to get into touch with him at the moment. The delay rendered her, if anything, rather keener on the interview than before. She would ring him up between half past four and five, when he might be in to tea, between seven and eight, when he should be dressing for dinner, and again between half past eleven and twelve, when he would probably be back from his evening occupation, whatever it might have been, with a view to going to bed.

She took her books, gave Burbage threepence for wrapping them up for her, and walked back to her flat in Endell Street. It is but a dingy thoroughfare, but convenient to the offices of the journals for which she chiefly worked—the *Gadfly*, in King's Street, the *English Review*, in Tavistock Street, and *Heart's-ease* and the *Hearth*, in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. Moreover, it is not an expensive neighborhood; and for thirty-five pounds a year Ann rented a larger, airier flat than she would have got for sixty pounds farther west or south.

As lady journalists go, Ann was a rich young woman. She had eighty pounds a year of her own; and this year, the third of her journalistic career, upon which she had embarked at the age of nineteen, she expected to make nearly a hundred and forty pounds by her writing. It was a large sum for a free lance to make, for she was not definitely on the staff of any paper, but was receiving pay only for actual articles, reviews, and interviews. But Ann had a genuine gift for descriptive writing; she had been cultivating it for three years, and was cultivating it still with sedulous care. She had had as good an education as can be got in London; and most important of all, she was a born observer. Naturally, therefore, she had acquired a useful working knowledge of human nature, and was as quick at getting work from an editor, or the salient facts from the person she was interviewing, as many a man who had been a journalist

twice as long as she; perhaps sometimes a little quicker.

She was well aware that she owed some of her rapid progress in her career to her pretty, piquant face, and deep-blue, heavily lashed eyes. Sometimes they had given her the first opening which had enabled her careful, intelligent work to tell; sometimes they had smoothed her path to valuable copy. On the other hand, she was quite alive to their drawbacks; sometimes they prevented her from inducing an editor to intrust to her some piece of really responsible work. Also they sometimes helped, sometimes hindered her by causing the majority of the men with whom she came into contact to fall in love with her with a singular precipitancy. At first she had found this masculine tendency flattering; but of late she had come to regard it as generally trying and frequently vexatious. She was too proud to make use of these victims to her charm; and some of them resented her insensibility with more or less bitterness. Since no single one of them had caught her fancy, much less touched her heart, she found them chiefly an annoyance.

In truth, for all her piquant and alluring charm, Ann was endowed with a delicate fastidiousness of nature which she had retained unweakened through the three years of her struggle in the arena of London journalism. She did not shrink from men, indeed; hers was too full a nature. But she found the men she met different from the men, or rather the man, of her dreams, lacking in the deeper refinement that was her essential craving, and she held them aloof. Comrades they might be, but she refused to be drawn into deeper intimacy.

And now, at the mature age of twenty-two and a quarter, she found herself strongly attracted to the unknown author of "Hannah's Honey-moon." She told herself that she was girlish and idiotic, that if she did come to know him, he would prove to be ordinary and disappointing; but she did not strive to blind herself to the strength of this odd attraction. Instead

of getting to work at once, as she had intended, on the books she had brought from the offices of the *Gadfly*, she went deliberately into her bedroom, brought back "Hannah's Honeymoon," and set about rereading it slowly with a view to building up yet more fully, from scattered hints and revealing passages, the kindred and appealing character she had divined behind the work.

At half past four she laid the book aside and rang up the exchange. She found herself quivering with excitement as she waited, and laughed at herself for a little fool. None the less her heart gave a jump when, instead of the telephone girl's peevish treble, a man's deep, pleasant voice asked:

"Who is it?"

"Is that Mr. Hargraves?—Mr. Edward Hargraves?" she said.

"Yes," said the voice.

"This is Miss Anning—of the *Gadfly*. The editor has asked me to interview you."

"Thanks, very much. But I'm afraid it's out of the question," the voice replied in a tone of cold civility.

"Oh, but why? So many people are interested in the author of 'Hannah's Honeymoon'—tens of thousands—hundreds of thousands," said Ann.

"It's very nice of you to say so. But if they are, it's all wrong. What they should be interested in is the book, if it's really worth anything, because the best of me is in it."

"Yes; that's quite true. But there isn't enough of you in the book for them; they want more," protested Ann.

"It's very nice of you to say so. But in that case they'll have to wait until I write another book."

"Oh, but think how interviews help the sale of the book. Each one brings it to the notice of dozens more people," said Ann in a coaxing tone.

"No, no. Good wine needs no bush, you know," the voice answered.

"Oh, yes, it does—nowadays. It needs a whole clump of trees," protested Ann. "An interview is just a nice, large, waving branch."

"No, no. I'm afraid it's no use, Miss Anning. I have quite made up my mind

not to be interviewed. I'm sorry. Good-by."

"Well, we'll talk about it again. I shan't take this as final. Good-by," said Ann.

She hung up the receiver in unruffled spirits, by no means dismayed. After what she had heard from the publisher, she had not expected that an interview with Edward Hargraves would be arranged at once, and this first check had merely strengthened her in her resolve to have one with him. She had some knowledge of what could be done with the recalcitrant by persistence; and, as a journalist, she felt it her first duty to be persistent.

CHAPTER III.

Ann awoke next morning with her interest in the author of "Hannah's Honeymoon" very little abated. She was somewhat surprised by this, for she had expected the impression the book had made on her to be a little worn by a night's sleep; it must have been deeper than she had supposed.

She was careful not to ring Hargraves up after breakfast, for she believed that few human beings were truly amiable in the morning; and an author, with a morning's tiresome, and probably painful, creative work before him was not likely to be among them.

Before getting to her own work, she read one of the chapters of "Hannah's Honeymoon" that had most attracted her. As she put it down, she said softly to herself:

"Yes; the heart of a child."

She reviewed one novel and read the greater part of another, taking a few notes. Both of them seemed to her uncommonly insipid after "Hannah's Honeymoon." Then came a knock on the outer door of her flat; and Mrs. Davis, the woman who came every morning to clean it and prepare her breakfast, brought in a cablegram.

Ann knew that it was from Mr. Willett, the literary editor of the *New York Courier*. She had met him in London the previous summer; and the result of the meeting had been that she

had done some work—well-paid work—for his paper. She opened the cablegram eagerly and read:

Cable interview author "Hannah's Honey-moon," WILLETT.

"Thank you. No answer," said Ann, her eyes dancing.

This put the interviewing of Edward Hargraves on quite another plane, the really important business plane. It would mean at least fifty dollars; and it might very well mean more, for she suspected that Mr. Willett had not cabled to her till his regular staff at the London office of the paper had failed. In that case, success would mean not only the fifty dollars for the actual interview; it would mean that she had proved really useful to the paper, and she would be intrusted with other important work by its editors.

She looked at her watch and found that it was a quarter past one. It was a fairly good hour to telephone. Edward Hargraves would probably have stopped work, or be on the point of stopping it, to lunch; and with his morning's work behind him, he should be in a good temper.

She went to the telephone, rang up the exchange, and asked for his number. Then came his voice, asking: "Yes? Who is it?"

"Oh, good morning, Mr. Hargraves. It's Miss Anning," said Ann. "About that interview?"

"No, no; no interview!" Edward Hargraves answered sharply.

"But I've just had a cable from the States clamoring for me to interview you."

"Well, it can't be done," said Edward Hargraves firmly.

"Oh, but, Mr. Hargraves—surely you wouldn't disappoint a whole continent! Think of the waiting millions!" pleaded Ann in her most coaxing tone.

"Waiting grandmothers!" scoffed Edward Hargraves.

"But really you have a duty to your readers, you know." Ann spoke with some severity.

"Yes. My duty to my readers is not to pander to any desire on their part

for irrelevant and impertinent details about my private life; and I'm going to discharge it like a man. Good morning." And he rang off.

Ann laughed ruefully. Edward Hargraves might have the heart of a child, but he certainly had an uncommonly grown-up will. Nevertheless, she was by no means beaten; the struggle, indeed, was only beginning. Of the ultimate result of it, she had no doubt whatever. A man's will has a very poor chance against a woman's; and this second check merely settled her in a firm determination to have that interview at any cost. She would, to begin with, persist with the telephone and ring him up again that day.

Accordingly, at a quarter past seven, she went to the telephone and reached out to take the receiver; then she drew back her hand, hesitating. Should she make the personal appeal, or should she not? She gave herself a defiant little shake; she would!

She rang up 1911 Regent, and Hargraves' voice answered.

"It's Miss Anning, about that interview," she explained, and she heard him smother an exclamation.

"You know, it would be such a help to me," she added quickly in her sweetest tone. "Both the London and the New York editor will have a much lower opinion of me if I fail to get it."

"I'm sorry, but it's a matter of principle," Hargraves answered firmly; but she fancied that she heard a faint undertone of compunction in his voice.

"People always say that when they're being disagreeable," she said sadly.

"It isn't that at all!" he protested. "I'm sure that, as a woman, you feel the value of principle even more strongly than I."

"Not of that principle," said Ann, yet more sadly.

He seemed to hesitate; then he said: "I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll write you a testimonial to show to your editors, declaring that you're the most persistent journalist in London."

"Now you're laughing at me. What's the use of persistency without results?"

There were veritable tears in Ann's voice.

"I'm very sorry. But it's all I can do," he said; but she took the contrition in his tone as a sign that he was weakening.

"Oh, no! You're not sorry a bit! You're just hard-hearted! Good night." And she rang off.

She smiled wickedly. "That will make him uncomfortable — horrid wretch!" she said in a tone of satisfaction.

She reflected for some time after hanging up the receiver. It seemed to her that the time for telephonal persistence had passed and that more active measures must be taken. She had better begin by a careful and thorough reconnaissance of Hargraves' rooms; and since she was having tea with a friend, Connie Despard, at the bridge club in Dover Street, the next afternoon, she could very well make that reconnaissance then. She did not expect to find the reconnaissance easy, for it was quite clear that Edward Hargraves had fenced himself in very securely indeed to have balked so many experienced journalists. Undoubtedly he could not be taken by surprise.

At half past four the next day she went to the Dover Street Bridge Club, and found Connie Despard in the middle of a rubber. As was her habit, she sat down at her friend's elbow and watched the play and the players with an observant eye. She had obtained the material for two or three articles on bridge clubs from having tea here with Connie Despard. She had told Connie that she proposed to write them, and had been warmly encouraged in the task by that sporting young lady, who enjoyed the knowledge, withheld from her fellow members, that there was a child among them taking notes. None of them ever dreamed that Ann wrote, for she was careful always to wear her prettiest frock and hat on these visits; and the idle members of the club enjoyed a firm, but baseless, conviction that only plain and dowdy women ever devoted themselves to intellectual pursuits.

The rubber came to an end, and the two girls betook themselves to an inner room that they might be able to talk freely, out of hearing of the players. Their tea was brought to them to a table in the left-hand window, from which there was a quite exhaustive view of the backs of half the houses in Albemarle Street. Ann, talking eagerly to her friend, gazed at them for a while with unseeing eyes. Then, of a sudden, she became aware that she was looking at a large block of flats up the outside of which, with an entrance through a window into every story, rose a fire escape.

She looked at this prospect more attentively; then she said:

"I say, is that block of flats Wellington Mansions, by any chance?"

"It is, indeed. Why? Do you know anybody who lives in them?" asked Connie.

"There's somebody who lives in them whom I want to know—at least I'm commissioned by two papers to interview him. It's Edward Hargraves, the author of 'Hannah's Honeymoon.' He won't be interviewed—he's a perfect brute about it. But I'm going to do it in spite of him—just to show him."

"Oh, what fun! I wish you'd take me with you!" cried Connie.

Ann shook her head gravely.

"It couldn't be done," she said. "It'll be hard enough for one strange woman to get at him. Two would be impossible."

"What a pity! What have you been doing about it so far?"

Ann gave her the gist of the conversations over the telephone, and Connie said that it seemed pretty hopeless.

"It does. But all the same it's got to be done," declared Ann firmly.

They finished their tea, and, contrary to her usual custom, which was to go back with Connie into the other room and watch her play another rubber, Ann took leave of her friend at once.

She walked briskly round into Albemarle Street, and was pleased to see, projecting from the doorway of Wellington Mansions, a board proclaiming

the fact that there were flats to let in them.

She entered, and found that the Mansions were in two sections; in the first were the flats from one to twenty, in the second the flats from twenty-one to forty. She asked the porter if any were to be let in the first section, and learned that flats seven, twelve, fifteen, and twenty were to be let, twelve and twenty furnished.

Ann said that she would like to see them, and the porter called a boyish clerk from the office, who, on hearing what she wanted, fetched the keys, and bade her come with him upstairs. This suited Ann very well, for she was sure that she would never be suspected of journalism by this boyish clerk.

They first examined the unfurnished flat seven. From its windows, Ann studied the fire escape from close at hand, but it was not till they came to the second floor that she began to talk about it. Then she said that she must have a flat in direct communication with it, since she was in such dread of an outbreak of fire that she would never be able to sleep peacefully in such a high building unless she knew that she had merely to step out of her window on to the fire escape.

"Why, that's funny, madam," said the clerk. "As a rule, we can't let any of the end flats—twenty, sixteen, twelve, eight, or four—to a lady, just because of the fire escape. They're more afraid of burglars than of fire."

"I'm not," said Ann firmly, rejoiced to hear that Edward Hargraves' flat and two of the vacant ones were on the fire escape.

Then they went into number twelve. Ann was pleased to find that it was simply furnished, and to learn that its tenant was away for the summer, that the rent of it was four guineas a week, that she could take possession of it as soon as her references had been verified, and that, since she insisted on it, she might take it for a week on trial.

They inspected flat twenty, also, but Ann, without any hesitation, chose flat twelve; she much preferred to ascend the fire escape to Edward Hargraves'

flat—in which case her head would come first into view of it—than to descend it, with her ankles appearing first.

She came down and accompanied the clerk to the office. She gave him the names of her family lawyer and of Connie Despard as references, and he promised to write to them at once. She came out of Wellington Mansions very much pleased. It looked as if, in three days at most, she would be able to storm Edward Hargraves' stronghold whenever the whim took her.

CHAPTER IV.

Ann was in the middle of her breakfast the next morning when Mr. Fosbrook rang her up from his home at Chiswick.

"Are you going to Henley, by any chance?" he asked.

"I hadn't made up my mind about it," said Ann.

"Well, Mrs. Arbuthnot does most of the Henley notes, and Harrison does the rest. But I can do with some—crisp and nasty for choice—apart from the fashions and the sport. If you'll go down, the paper will pay your expenses—you'll keep them moderate—and pay at the usual rate for the notes."

Ann accepted his offer with alacrity. She was very much pleased with this commission; she felt that it was a tribute not so much to her capacity as to her originality. It seemed as if Mr. Fosbrook had made up his mind that she could do work that Mrs. Arbuthnot, who wrote most of the society notes, and Mr. Harrison, his chief sporting contributor, could not.

She fell to considering the matter of a frock, and was annoyed to find that she had not a distinctive Henley frock. Then she had a happy thought. She had frocks and to spare for lawn tennis and actual boating; if she were to hire a punt and punt herself about, she could wear a businesslike frock.

She bethought herself, too, that Connie Despard, who led a well-to-do bachelor life in a Jermyn Street flat, was going and might like to share the punt. She rang Connie up and found

that her suggestion came as something in the nature of a deliverance. In a moment of carelessness, Miss Despard had engaged herself to two young men for that very afternoon, and neither of them could, or perhaps would, change it to the morrow. If Ann would join her, she could allow both the young men to spend a happy afternoon in a punt with her.

"I see," said Ann. "I'm the padding to stop their getting their teeth into each other."

"Not quite that," said Connie Despard, laughing. "But, if you come, you'll certainly make for the happiness of all three of us."

"Very well; I'll come. But you know how attractive I am, so it's at your own risk."

"If both of them desert me for you, I shan't shed any bitter tears," declared Connie.

"You mean that you're absolutely certain of both. Well, in that case, they'll bite one another through me, and their blood will be on your head," warned Ann.

"I must chance it," Connie returned blithely.

She arranged to call for Ann on her way to the station, and rang off.

Ann had two hours before her; and she finished reading a book and wrote a review of it. Then she dressed. There was still a little time to spare, so she rang up Edward Hargraves. Somewhat to her disappointment, the exchange reported him out.

Then Connie Despard arrived with two young men of much the same height and coloring, tanned to much the same depth, and each of them with a luncheon basket from Harrod's. Neither of them was at his most cheerful, since both of them had been expecting to enjoy a tête-à-tête with Connie Despard, and had learned only that morning that it was to be a party of four. At the sight of Ann, however, both faces grew much brighter. Each of them felt that if the other succeeded in absorbing the attention of Connie Despard, he himself would not be by any means in a bad case.

Before they were halfway to Henley, it grew clear that either of them would be nearly as content to be with Ann as with Connie; and it seemed probable that the party would be divided into comfortably assorted pairs long before evening. Ann, indeed, had already made up her mind that Mr. Horace Sedgeway, who was slightly the taller and darker of the two, should spend the evening at her end of the punt, unless her friend showed a decided preference for him. She took no great interest in him, but every girl must take some interest in any personable young man who comes her way. Besides, moonlit evenings in punts did not enter so often into Ann's life that she proposed, even if her real interest did lie elsewhere, to let one be wasted utterly.

Mr. Horace Sedgeway and Mr. Peter Barrymore took it that they were to do all the punting; that the two girls would lie in graceful, careless, carefully arranged attitudes on the cushions. Ann disagreed with them. During her girlhood at Stratford-on-Avon, she had spent most of the spring, summer, and autumn on the river, and only at Oxford or Cambridge could you find girls so accomplished with an oar, a pair of sculls, or a punt pole. She had not put on a boating frock merely to compose herself in careful attitudes in it, and she insisted on punting.

At first the two young men were full of kindly encouragement and instruction; then they discovered that Ann could send along the punt at least as fast as either of them and manifestly with far less expenditure of muscular effort.

It was that that made the accident so inexplicable—to them.

Ann was punting away among a throng of boats, of all kinds and sizes, enjoying the tax upon her skill in steering, when of a sudden she saw, steering a dinghy a few feet ahead of her—Edward Hargraves.

In the suddenness of the meeting Ann not only stared at him, but it is to be feared that she stared at him with her mouth open. It is impossible to do this with a dignified air, and it was fortu-

nate that he did not see her till her lips were just closing. Ann saw his eyes brighten at the sight of her pretty face; and forthwith she acted with truly professional speed.

She drove her pole firmly into the river bottom, ran along the punt—shoving for all she was worth, since she did not want to be rescued either by Mr. Sedgeway or Mr. Barrymore—drove it right away from her, and was left clinging to the pole, subsiding gracefully into the water and shrieking for help, within four feet of Edward Hargraves.

As a dreamy, imaginative writer, he could not have been expected to act with the swiftness of a trained journalist, like Ann; but he slipped over the stern of the dinghy and caught her just as she was sinking, or to be exact—she could swim like a fish—letting herself sink, under water.

He caught her with his right arm, and almost at the same instant caught hold of the stern of the dinghy with his left hand. To his relief and surprise, Ann did not struggle, so it was quite easy to hold her up. Sedgeway was already bringing the punt back with the second pole, and when it nearly touched Ann, Barrymore caught her wrists, and with a helping shove from Edward Hargraves, hauled her into it.

Hargraves' friend promptly sculled the dinghy into the bank, and the hero scrambled ashore, the water streaming from him and about a stone of Thames mud clinging to his feet and the bottom of his trousers. He stamped violently several times, shaking a good deal of it off, waved his hand toward the punt, and started at a run up the bank to the barge that his college had sent to the meeting.

Ann sat at the end of the punt, dripping and laughing. In a great perturbation, Mr. Sedgeway and Mr. Barrymore by turns asked her however the accident had happened, and expressed their regret that they had not seen what was happening and saved her. Ann contented herself with assuring them that the accident was the most natural thing in the world—as indeed it was—and begged them not to blame themselves

for an occurrence that they could by no means have prevented. In the meantime, having recovered the lost pole they were both of them punting as hard as they could to a house boat belonging to some friends of Connie Despard's.

Ann was promptly invited on board to be dried and dressed in fresh apparel; a simple matter, since some of the ladies of the party were spending the week on the boat. While they waited for her, both Mr. Sedgeway and Mr. Barrymore discussed the pluckiness with which she had taken her ducking with a fervor that awoke in Connie Despard's mind the gravest doubts as to the wisdom of throwing susceptible young men, however deeply they might appear to be attached to herself, into the society of Ann. It was clear that it was, to say the least of it, distracting.

After a while Ann reappeared in a boating frock almost identical in appearance with the one she had been wearing, and not so unlike it in fit. Her hat and coat had escaped the ducking, for she had taken them off to punt, so that she was little the worse for her misadventure. She thanked Connie Despard's friends warmly for fitting her out, and made a few mental notes of their costumes and the decoration of their house boat.

When she was once more back in the punt, she said to Connie: "Do you think they'd like a note about themselves in the society pages of the *Gadfly*?"

"Like it? Why, they'd love it!" cried Connie.

"Then I'll try to work it. I think I can," said Ann.

She was in two minds whether to wire a paragraph to the Associated News, recounting her rescue from the Thames by Edward Hargraves forthwith, or to let it wait for the morrow's evening papers. In the end she decided that she could write a far more effective account of it at home, and that she would let it wait.

Indeed, she wished to enjoy her outing with as strong a sense of freedom

from responsibility as possible; and, though she kept her eyes open for interesting facts and details of the scene, she did not let the effort trouble her greatly. The fact most present to her mind was that she could still feel the clasp of Edward Hargraves' arm holding her up in the water; and it is to be feared that she looked far more earnestly for him than she did for material for the *Gadfly*.

But she saw him no more; which was hardly to be wondered at, since the punt was continually on the move, and if he had returned to his dinghy, he was moving, also. She did not, however, allow herself to be disappointed by this failure; she reckoned it all to the good that she had so unexpectedly met him that once, and that she had turned the meeting to such good account. No man could refuse to see a young woman whom he had, to all seeming, saved from a watery grave.

She continued, therefore, to enjoy the rest of the afternoon and the evening exceedingly. As she had decided, Mr. Horace Sedgeway spent the evening at one end of the punt, Connie Despard and Mr. Peter Barrymore at the other. They were not eight feet apart, yet it was surprising how little either pair caught of the other's talk, so intimate, doubtless, were the confidences they were exchanging. But there are many people whom a moonlit river affects in that way.

When they got back to London, the station was crowded, and their emulous escorts left them for a moment in order to seize and bring taxicabs.

"Connie, who do you think the young man was who saved me?" asked Ann gravely.

"I don't know. Who?" said her friend quickly.

"Why, it was Edward Hargraves," said Ann.

"Edw—the man you want to interview? Oh, Ann, you're a perfect little fiend!" exclaimed Connie, laughing.

"Oh, no, I'm not! It was the interview. I must have that interview," said Ann firmly.

CHAPTER V.

When Ann reached home, at about a quarter past eleven that night, under the careful escort of Mr. Horace Sedgeway, she found a letter awaiting her from the boyish clerk of Wellington Mansions, announcing that her references were satisfactory, and that she was at liberty to take possession of flat No. 12 as soon as she liked. The clerk had indeed shown himself a hustler to arrange the matter so quickly. Doubtless he had realized that a lady of such abounding charm was a truly desirable tenant, and had made haste to verify the references in order to secure her as quickly as possible. She decided to take up her residence in the flat on the morrow; the sooner Mr. Willett had her cable, the better he would be pleased.

Then she sat down to write for the Associated News the paragraph recounting her rescue. It was but a short paragraph, yet she spent a full twenty minutes on it before she got it quite to her liking. Then, after the final correction and the final rereading, she said to herself in a tone of triumph:

"There! That *will* help to boom 'Hannah's Honeymoon.' It'll be in a hundred papers before the week's out!"

She had been careful not give her name, for she had no wish in the world for Edward Hargraves to know, yet a while, that the girl he had rescued was the journalist who had so pestered him. But she had not failed to describe herself as a "pretty" girl—mere accuracy demanded it; and it would have been unwarrantable, against all the best traditions of English journalism, for a brilliant young author to rescue a girl who was not pretty. But, with a view to awakening a keener interest and sympathy in the breasts of the readers of the hundred newspapers, she described herself as a "pretty, fragile" girl; and fragile she was not. No one could be fragile and propel a punt along the reaches of the Avon or the Thames at the pace she could. But she felt that "fragile" was necessary to the paragraph, and used it without a qualm.

She posted the paragraph in the pil-

lar box at the corner of Endell Street, and then went to bed in that state of splendid satisfaction which is enjoyed only by those who have done a really good day's work.

The next morning she awoke in very cheerful spirits, since a most important, and possibly exciting, day lay before her—the day on which she would interview Edward Hargraves. She got to her notes on Henley soon after breakfast, found herself in an excellent working mood, and wrote a column of the kind Mr. Fosbrook wanted in a few minutes over the hour. Then she wrote the note on the Mainwarings, Connie Despard's friends who had dressed her afresh after her wetting, for the society pages, if Mr. Fosbrook would allow it to be published.

That done, she packed in her largest trunk the clothes, linen, and plate that she would need for a week's stay in the Albemarle Street flat. A smaller trunk would have held all she needed, but she packed them in the largest because she thought it would make a better impression on the staff of Wellington Mansions.

She was not going to Henley again that afternoon, though both Mr. Horace Sedgeway and Connie Despard had pressed her to do so. Since she was not concerned with the fashions, the fashionables, or the rowing, she had exhausted the meeting as a source of paragraphs; and she wished to lose no time in the prosecution of her campaign against Edward Hargraves.

Accordingly, she took her trunk on a taxicab to Wellington Mansions soon after lunch. She was welcomed warmly by the boyish clerk, who helped her establish herself in the flat. When she had unpacked her trunk and put away her belongings in drawers and the wardrobe, she examined carefully the fire escape. It was too early to ascend it and take a look at Edward Hargraves' rooms. She could not use it before dark.

She got to her work again and wrote for an hour. Then she strolled down to the Writers' Club to tea, and on her

way took her reviews and her Henley notes to Mr. Fosbrook.

He welcomed her cheerfully, glanced through the notes and a couple of the reviews, and said in a tone of genuine satisfaction:

"You're certainly getting the note of the paper all right. I wish I could put you on to do all of our society stuff. You'd soon make the acquaintance of all the people who want to be advertised, once you were on our staff in that capacity; and they'd see to it that you got every chance of mixing with the really important people who don't care whether they're advertised or not."

"That would be splendid," said Ann gratefully and regretfully. "But, of course, I could never take Mrs. Arbuthnot's work from her."

Mr. Fosbrook looked at her with very shrewd eyes.

"I believe you mean that," he said.

"Why, of course I mean it!" said Ann hotly.

"Yes; you do speak the truth," said Mr. Fosbrook, in a dispassionate tone. "But I can tell you that you won't find too large a proportion of your fellow journalists with such scruples. They'll take your work from you, fast enough, if they can get it."

"Oh, that's happened to me." Ann's tone was somewhat rueful.

"As long as you know," said Mr. Fosbrook. "But on the whole you'd better stick to your scruples. By the way, are you making any advance in the matter of that interview with the author of 'Hannah's Honeymoon'? The editor of the *Evening Standard* said that two of his men had failed."

"Oh, we're getting on. Mr. Hargraves has already rescued me from a watery grave," said Ann, smiling demurely.

"A watery *what*?" cried Mr. Fosbrook.

"Grave," said Ann. "I fell into the river just against his dinghy yesterday afternoon, and he fished me out."

Mr. Fosbrook rose from his chair, came to her, held out his hand, and said solemnly:

"Shake hands. I ought really to kiss

you, of course; I should like to kiss you. Shaking hands is such a poor way of showing one's appreciation of capacity in a woman; and I do like to emphasize my appreciation of capacity when I meet it."

He shook hands with her warmly.

"Thank you," said Ann, still dimpling. "I like to be appreciated—though not with kisses."

"I know you don't; and it seems a pity," said Mr. Fosbrook, in a tone of deep regret. "Well, if you weren't going to get married, you'd go far. I don't see why you shouldn't have edited the *Times* in later life."

"But I'm not going to get married!" cried Ann.

"Oh, yes, you are," said Mr. Fosbrook, with gloomy conviction. "Just as you become a quite trustworthy contributor, with the exact note of the paper, you'll go and get married. Every woman who's worth her salt gets married."

"Oh, well, I'm different," comforted Ann.

He shook his head.

"Besides these things, I wrote a note for the society pages about the people who dried me and lent me fresh clothes after my dip yesterday, if you'd let it go in," Ann added, handing it to him.

He ran his eye over it.

"Oh, yes. That's all right. I'll see to it. We must stand by people who stand by us. And, while I think about it, I want you to write me an article on 'Marriage and the Professional Woman,' proving, of course, that she has no use for it; and write two longish letters, one from a woman doctor and another from an actress, saying that she has. You'll be paid for the letters at the usual rates. You needn't hurry over the job. I shan't want them before the first August issue. It'll be our silly-season correspondence."

"Thank you," said Ann. "And may I have some books?"

"Take any you like."

"Any of them?"

"Any and all of them, if you like. People who have narrow escapes from drowning should have all the reviewing

they want," he announced firmly; and he sat down again and fell to work on the article he was writing.

With a view to the transaction later with her faithful bookseller, Ann judiciously chose the six most expensive books that she felt herself competent to review. She bade Mr. Fosbrook goodbye, gave Burbage the books to wrap up and send by district messenger to her new flat, and went on to the Writers' Club for tea. She spent nearly an hour there, discussing the fashions and the events of the day with fellow members; then she walked briskly back to Albemarle Street, and by a quarter past six was at work again.

She worked steadily, keeping an ear alert for a movement in the flat above, till nearly half past seven. She heard no movement; plainly, Edward Hargraves was out—possibly again at Henley.

She was half inclined to dine at the restaurant of the Mansions, on the chance of his also dining there, but presently dismissed the idea, since she intended to take him by surprise by means of the fire escape, and there was nothing to be gained by weakening the effect of her sudden entry.

Accordingly, she cooked herself an omelet in her new kitchen, and, with some bread and butter and fruit, made a meal. Then she got to her work again.

At about a quarter past nine she heard voices on the stairs, and then movements in the flat above; and, to her annoyance, gathered that Edward Hargraves had come in, indeed, but that he had not come in alone. This was not at all what she wanted; he was still inaccessible.

But the fact that other people were with him did not prevent her from telephoning to him; and, since she had it in mind to give him one more chance of yielding gracefully to her desire before she used the fire escape, at about a quarter to ten she rang him up.

When he learned who it was, he exclaimed: "Oh, bother!"

"Aren't you going to yield gracefully,

and let me have that interview?" she asked.

"No, I'm not!" he returned sharply.

"But what is the use of struggling against destiny?" she asked, in a pitying tone.

"There's no destiny about it," he said.

"Oh, isn't there? Well, I want you to get it clearly into your head that I'm going to have that interview whether you like it or not," announced Ann mockingly.

"Oh, are you? We'll see about that!" he said, and rang off.

Ann laughed mischievously.

CHAPTER VI.

Edward Hargraves had indeed spent the afternoon at Henley, with his father, the Dean of Milchester, his mother, and his friend, Mr. William Lloyd, more appropriately known to an extensive circle, or, rather, to extensive circles, of friends as "Billy." They had returned to London for dinner, and, in spite of Mr. William Lloyd's suggestion that they should go to a "jolly little place in Soho"—Edward was sure it could be no place for a dean of the Church of England, especially since his father was wearing his clerical clothes—they had dined heartily and heavily on true English food at Simpson's. Then they had come to Wellington Mansions, for Mrs. Hargraves was somewhat tired by the afternoon on the river. Mr. William Lloyd had proposed to take the dean to the Cabaret Theater Club for an hour; and, in spite of Edward's efforts to prevent the expedition, the dean had accepted the offer. He had said loftily:

"A modern churchman, my dear boy—a modern churchman has to be a man of the world." Edward got a sharp picture of his father being a man of the world at Milchester. "It is quite inconceivable that a club, any kind of club, could do me any harm. I will, therefore, extend my knowledge of modern London by accompanying—er—Billy."

He always spoke of Mr. William Lloyd as "er—Billy." To a man of his irreproachable dignity it was difficult to utter such a common word as "Billy."

"Oh, it's really all right, Ned," said Mr. William Lloyd cheerfully. "It isn't really French. It's only what the English always get for their money."

With that cryptic statement, Edward had to be content; and since it was no use going to the Cabaret Club directly after dinner, unless Frank Harris were speaking there, they had come back to Wellington Mansions that the dean might have half an hour's rest before setting out on his exploration of modern London. Later, he would again return to the Mansions to sleep, for he had taken flat No. 19, on the floor above, for the fortnight he and his wife were spending in London.

On their arrival at Edward's flat, the dean promptly settled himself in the most comfortable easy-chair, while Mrs. Hargraves went into Edward's bedroom and began to rummage about for garments to mend. The dean folded his hands on the second and third buttons of his ample waistcoat and closed his eyes, and the two young men fell into a discussion of the comparative merits of the Leander and Trinity crews. In the middle of it, Mrs. Hargraves came back, bearing a handful of socks, with a smile of content at her discovery on her fine, distinguished face.

There could be no doubt that Edward's brains had come to him through his mother. The dean was everything that a dean should be, tall, portly, big-nosed, and benevolent. But the face of Mrs. Hargraves, with its finely cut features, keen, observant eyes, broad brow, and sensitive lips, was the face of a woman with whom the rulers of nations take counsel whenever they can find her. It was said among their friends that the dean owed his deanery to her, and that even though she was shut away in the close of Milchester Cathedral, the sleepiest, most old-fashioned close in England, she would yet make him a bishop.

The discussion came to an end, and Mrs. Hargraves asked sadly:

"My dear boy, where *do* you buy your socks?"

"Oh, anywhere, mater—wherever I see socks that please me. I wish you wouldn't bother about darning them," said Edward. "I can always buy new ones."

"Extravagant boy," murmured his mother. "But darning is really very good for women; it soothes them, and helps them to bear up."

"I'm always very firm with my socks when they go back on me like that. I drown them," said Mr. William Lloyd.

"Drown them—er—Billy?" exclaimed the dean.

"Yes, sir. The Thames flows at the bottom, more or less, of the King's Bench Walk; and when I go forth into the world, I throw the faithless socks into it," explained Mr. William Lloyd.

"Ha! A curious practice—a very curious practice," said the dean softly, and he closed his eyes.

Mr. William Lloyd was an artist who devoted most of his time and talent to black and white, and thereby earned a somewhat scanty livelihood. He was a young man of the liveliest spirits, and he led an uncommonly rackety life. Many mothers would have disapproved of him as a friend for their sons, but Mrs. Hargraves did not. She was quite sure that there was no real vice in him, and she had a strong feeling that frequent contact with his careless and volatile temperament was very good for Edward, and that their friendship had arisen from a deep-rooted craving in her son's nature for this irresponsible brightness. She had a fear lest Edward's innate seriousness might degenerate into a cramping priggishness, and she considered the society of Mr. William Lloyd an excellent corrective of any such tendency.

It is to be feared that, with a mother's selfishness, she gave very little thought to the advantage or disadvantage to Mr. William Lloyd of association with Edward. But, as a matter of fact, it was beneficial. Very often, in his wilder moments, the thought of Edward's disapproval acted as a useful restraint on him.

There was a pause, then Mr. William Lloyd said: "Besides, I have no one to darn my socks."

"You mean you've got too many," said Edward, in a tone of cold disapproval.

It was, indeed, a fact that at Mr. William Lloyd's rooms, in the Temple, Edward had met a number of young ladies, many of them startling and all of a very independent spirit, of whom he could not approve, and from whom he shrank with an almost constitutional distaste. They were, indeed, very different from the quiet, demure, and simple girls whom he had known for so many years in the close of Milchester Cathedral.

Mr. William Lloyd, unabashed, chuckled contentedly:

"I see. You think that they're so busy falling over one another in their eagerness to get my socks mended that the thread always gets broken. But it isn't so. Most of them don't know how to sew, and the rest have a soul above it."

A gentle, but uncommonly firm, snore from the dean interrupted them.

"Dear, dear! This is perfectly disgraceful!" said Mrs. Hargraves, but not loud enough to wake him.

Mr. William Lloyd sprang to Edward's desk, seized a sheet of paper, and sprang to the side of the table that gave the best view of the sleeping dignitary.

"Don't make a noise! I must capture that snore! The chance of a lifetime!" he cried; and his eyes shone and his whimsical face was all alight as he fell to work.

Mrs. Hargraves laughed gently; she always humored Mr. William Lloyd.

"Capture it if you can," she said. "But on no account publish it."

Then the telephone on Edward's desk rang, and he went to it.

He put his ear to it, said, "Who is it?" scowled, and cried: "Oh, bother!"

"It's that girl again!" said Mr. William Lloyd cheerfully.

"What girl?" asked Mrs. Hargraves quickly.

"An interviewer—awfully keen on

Edward. He thinks it's on the book. But he won't see her."

"It's foolish of him not to," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"There's no destiny about it," said Edward into the telephone.

"It is," said Mr. William Lloyd. "It's bad business—especially in these days when business and glory are so closely connected."

"Oh, are you? We'll see about that!" said Edward to the telephone in a tone of extreme irritation.

He rang off, and turned to them with an exclamation:

"Of all the cheek! Of all the cheek!"

"What does she want now?" Mr. William Lloyd inquired calmly.

"She says that she'll get that interview whether I like it or not!" said Edward indignantly.

"Then she probably will. You're not a cabinet minister, surrounded by squadrons of detectives," said Mrs. Hargraves, smiling. "Why don't you ask her to come here, and get it over? It would have been much the simplest thing to do."

"Yes; and we could have helped. We could have given her lots of pointers—lots," said Mr. William Lloyd.

"Thank you," said Edward grimly. "It would be bad enough without that. Besides, I've given her the entirely reasonable grounds on which I object to the whole system of prying into the details of the artist's private life."

"The reasonable grounds? Why didn't you tell her that you'd got a squint? She'd have understood that," said Mr. William Lloyd, with the cynicism that comes of living in the Temple.

"It would certainly have been more intelligent, though you haven't any squint," Mrs. Hargraves agreed sadly. "Who is she?"

"A Miss Anning," said Edward.

"I believe she's 'A. A.' of the *Gadfly*; and, if she is, you ought to let her have the interview just out of gratitude for that ripping review she's just given the book."

"Oh, where is it? I haven't seen

that one. Does it say anything about your women?" asked Mrs. Hargraves eagerly.

"Rather! Produce it, Ned. Don't keep your mother waiting for the intellectual feast," said Mr. William Lloyd.

"Oh, it will keep," said Edward, with some reluctance.

"No, it won't," objected Mrs. Hargraves quickly.

"You're right. It's quite sour already," said Mr. William Lloyd playfully.

"I like to hear both good and bad," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"Oh, I don't mind a slating. A good literary slating on points of construction and style is really helpful," said Edward, crossing the room to his desk. "But when a critic impugns my accuracy——"

"About women!" interjected Mr. William Lloyd.

"But surely they always do in the case of a first novel—by a male novelist?" Mrs. Hargraves suggested.

"Yes; but—in my case——" Edward began.

"They're quite right. You don't know anything about women," declared Mr. William Lloyd, with the firmness of complete conviction.

"Thank you," said Edward bitterly.

"Don't mention it, my dear chap."

"But what does she say?" asked Mrs. Hargraves.

"It's probably a he," said Edward, taking a copy of the *Gadfly* from his desk. "This is the kind of thing:

"Mr. Hargraves' methods of description are admirable and so is his characterization, as far as his men are concerned. But like most of our younger novelists, he fails utterly in his handling of women. Indeed, it is quite clear that he knows nothing of women below the age of forty——"

"Virtuous Edward!" put in Mr. William Lloyd, in a tone of warm approval.

"It's certainly true," said Mrs. Hargraves, with a sigh.

"Oh, come; that's a bit thick, mother!" protested Edward.

"I should have said it was a bit thin.

"But no matter," said Mr. William Lloyd amiably.

"Go on. What else does she say?" said Mrs. Hargraves.

"Oh, she goes on going for me for a bit:

"Mr. Hargraves' description of a passionate kiss displays an equal poverty of experience and imagination——"

"Harsh—very harsh!" said Mr. William Lloyd.

"Oh, Edward! Do you mean to say that you never altered that kiss?" cried Mrs. Hargraves.

"I suppose I didn't," said Edward gloomily.

"Well, I'm only a black-and-white artist, working in a medium that everybody says is much inferior to the written word, but if I couldn't get a kiss better than that, I'd chuck art and become a photographer—an itinerant photographer," said Mr. William Lloyd virtuously.

"'Hannah's Honeymoon' was delightful in parts; and the reviewer is perfectly right: the characters of the men—Hannah's father and the old farmer—were excellent," said Mrs. Hargraves thoughtfully. "Well, I suppose you'll learn about women some day. You'll never write a good novel if you don't. The only thing is——" She stopped.

"Well, what is the only thing?" asked Edward, after a pause.

"I'm so afraid that the wrong woman may teach you."

CHAPTER VII.

There was a pause after Mrs. Hargraves had given expression to her fear; then Mr. William Lloyd observed no less thoughtfully:

"I never thought of that. But there's a good deal in it."

"I'm not a child," said Edward stiffly.

"Oh, no; not at all," cried Mr. William Lloyd, with a readiness a trifle suspicious. "But the important thing is, you've got me to look after you; and I'm really labeled—though you don't notice it—'minxes beware!'"

"Yes; I can see it," said Mrs. Hargraves quickly.

"Really! If you think I want a protector——" began Edward, with some heat.

"A protector? At your age? At twenty-eight? Heavens, what an idea!" cried Mr. William Lloyd, with splendid vehemence; and, forgetting for the moment that she was the wife of a dean, he closed one eye at Mrs. Hargraves.

"Absurd!" she agreed gravely. "But what else does the reviewer say?"

"Oh, he goes on—— Let's see." Edward raised the *Gadfly* to his eyes. "Oh, yes.

"The author of 'Hannah's Honeymoon' is just a very clever child——"

Mr. William Lloyd coughed with a sudden loudness that awoke the dean in the middle of a gentle snore.

"——who has by some freak of nature been able to observe life with much of the analytic power of a philosopher, and to write about it with the optimistic inexperience of youth. Mr. Hargraves will go a long way. But he should not go alone."

"I am here!" announced Mr. William Lloyd; and he struck himself violently on the chest.

"It was a woman who wrote it, and a clever woman, too," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"Probably some wretched bluestocking," said Edward, with cold scorn; and he strolled across to Mr. William Lloyd, who had been trying to capture the snore all the time they had been talking.

The dean took up the *Evening News* from the table and ran his eye down its columns.

"I like 'A. A.,'" said Mrs. Hargraves.

"By Jove, Billy has captured your snore, sir!" said Edward, to his father.

"My snore! I never snore!" the dean exclaimed indignantly.

"All the same, Billy's got it down in black and white," said Edward.

"No! Has he? I must see." The dean fitted his glasses to his nose, and held out his hand, laughing gently.

Mr. William Lloyd hesitated; then,

with an expressionless face, he handed the drawing to the dean.

As his eyes fell on it, the laughter of the dean ceased abruptly, and his eyes opened wider.

"Do I really look like that—er—remarkable—" he began, in a doubtful tone.

"The snore does. It was the snore I was drawing," Mr. William Lloyd explained diplomatically.

"Um—very interesting—very interesting," said the dean, somewhat coldly.

"It's yours, sir. I beg you'll keep it," said Mr. William Lloyd, with a generous air.

"No, thank you—er—Billy. I won't rob you of it," said the dean stiffly. "And yet—on second thoughts—yes—I will accept it," he added quickly.

"Committed to oblivion," murmured Mr. William Lloyd sadly.

"And what were you all talking about?" asked the dean amiably, as he put down the drawing and took up the *Evening News* again.

"We were telling Edward that he knows very little about women," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"Ah, there's plenty of time—plenty of time," said the dean.

"If something doesn't happen to enlighten me before I start my next novel," cried Edward impatiently, "I shall chuck fiction and take to politics."

"The same thing, only better paid; four hundred a year," said Mr. William Lloyd.

"Ah, if you'd only be guided by me, my dear boy," said the dean, "and get engaged to some nice girl, like—"

"Yes, yes, I know—Evangeline," interrupted Edward, going to the mantelpiece and taking from it a photograph of a nice-looking girl of the true English type, with very regular features and a sedate, dullish air.

"Well, why not, Edward? She's amiable and thoroughly—thoroughly domesticated. You've been friends since you were quite little. And she'd be so safe—so very safe," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"But I've told you dear people so often that I'm not in love with Evan-

geline," objected Edward, putting down the photograph on the mantelpiece.

Mrs. Hargraves sighed.

"It's no use your sighing, mater," said Edward. "I've never yet met a woman who—"

"Yes; that's just it. You *are* in such a dangerous state. And, after all, Evangeline is the kind of a girl who doesn't want much romance; she'll marry and be happy on very little."

"I suppose I'm much the same," said Edward thoughtfully.

"I shouldn't bet on that," said Mr. William Lloyd.

"Oh, she is so suitable!" said Mrs. Hargraves.

"Nor on that," said Mr. William Lloyd.

"God bless my soul! What's this?" cried the dean. "You never told us that you'd rescued a young woman at Henley."

"Rescued a young woman?" cried Mrs. Hargraves.

"Oh, there wasn't any rescuing," Edward explained, with some impatience. "It was only a little duffer of a girl trying to punt; and she and the punt parted company. I saved her a complete ducking, that was all."

"All—all? Hark to the hero!" cried Mr. William Lloyd. "It was thrilling—fearfully thrilling! The beautiful maiden's pole stuck in the mud and lifted her out of the punt; and there she was crying, 'Help! Help!' and subsiding slowly into the water—a really pretty girl, mark you!"

"Was she?" asked Edward.

"Was she? Insensible block! And then the gallant young hero sprang overboard, seized her in his powerful grip, and, with the help of our dinghy, held her above the devouring waters of the Thames."

"And now I suppose there's going to be a fuss about it. I do wish people wouldn't make a fuss about nothing," growled Edward.

"Nothing? I do wish it had been *my* rescue. She was a topping girl!" cried Mr. William Lloyd, with enthusiasm. "And Edward got away without letting the poor young thing thank him. She'd

have been pining for her deliverer and never known who he was. So I'm glad they've got it in the papers. Edward said they wouldn't. But I was sure they would."

"And what does the paper say?" asked Mrs. Hargraves.

The dean cleared his throat and read in his most impressive tones:

"Heroic novelist."

"Heroic grandmother!" growled Edward.

"Mr. Edward Hargraves, the brilliant young writer, whose first novel has been one of the most widely discussed books of the season, performed a skillful rescue at Henley yesterday afternoon. A pretty, fragile young lady, who was punting a heavy punt, drove her pole too deeply into the river bottom, with the result that, in trying to extricate it, she and the punt parted company. She was left clinging to the pole and sinking slowly into the water. But before she was quite submerged, Mr. Hargraves sprang to her help from a dinghy, and, swimming powerfully, held her up till she was drawn safely into the punt from which she had fallen. Mr. Hargraves then swam to the bank amid the hearty plaudits of those who had witnessed his gallant action."

"Gallant rot!" growled Edward.

"Now, I consider it creditable—very creditable. It showed presence of mind and—er—resource—yes, resource," approved the dean.

"And have you really no idea who the girl was?" asked Mrs. Hargraves.

"Not the slightest. All the same, I don't believe she was fragile. She felt quite plump to me—not fat, you know, but just plump."

"Marvelous powers of observation! But you're certainly bucking up, old chap," said Mr. William Lloyd.

"But if she was in his arms——"

"She was in his right arm," corrected Mr. William Lloyd.

"Well, in his right arm, he could hardly have helped observing whether she was plump or thin," said the dean.

"That's true," assented Mr. William Lloyd. He took out his watch. "But I think, sir, that if we're going to the Cabaret Club, we ought to be starting. There is a legend that at about half past eleven it grows rowdy."

"Yes, yes. We'll go at once. It's

my duty as a modern churchman to see the world. But there is a mean in all things. And rowdiness—well—er—rowdiness is chiefly an attribute of underbred young men; it has no value as er—er—a social experience," said the dean.

"Rather not!" agreed Mr. William Lloyd.

"Mind you take care of him, Billy," Mrs. Hargraves cautioned.

"I think perhaps I'd better go along with you, after all," said Edward.

"No. I don't want to go to bed yet. I want you to stay and talk to me, Edward. I'm sure that your father will be quite safe with Billy," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"Oh, I'll take every responsibility," said Mr. William Lloyd, with cheerful confidence.

"For goodness' sake, be careful whom you introduce him to, Billy—not that red-haired girl with the large mouth, at any rate," said Edward.

"Really—really, any one would think that I cannot be trusted alone in London!" the dean exclaimed, with some heat. "I am the proper person to decide to whom I will be introduced and to whom I will not."

"Oh, of course—of course! But Billy has such queer friends," said Edward.

"My dear boy, do remember that I knew the world before you were born." The dean spoke a little pompously. Then, turning to Mrs. Hargraves, he added: "I take it you'll go to bed early, my dear. You've had a tiring day."

"Yes. I'll just have a little talk with Edward, and then I'll go to bed," she promised.

"Good! I'll look in and say good night as I go upstairs, Edward. Come along—er—Billy."

Mr. William Lloyd allowed him to get out of the door; then he said in a low voice:

"He'll be quite safe with me, Mrs. Hargraves. There's no gilding and no vice in the Cabaret Club, and the pictures on the wall are cubist. It's only what the English always get for their money. Good night!"

CHAPTER VIII.

When the door had closed behind Mr. William Lloyd and the dean, and their voices were dying away on the staircase, Edward began:

"It's exactly like Billy to take the pater to the Cabaret Club."

"And it's exactly like your father to go," said Mrs. Hargraves. "But I'm glad they've gone, for I've been wanting to have a talk with you for a long time."

"What about?" asked Edward, somewhat surprised by her serious air and tone.

"About what we've just been discussing—your insensibility to women. A parson's wife is peculiarly placed, and, however much a woman of the world she may be, she must not show it."

"Yes, I know," said Edward.

"Your father is one of the best of men, but he's narrow-minded. He can't help it. He's told me so—often."

"Well, he's of his generation—isn't he?" said Edward, putting forward the best defense he could think of.

"Yes. But a big man—a big novelist—mustn't be of his generation; he must be able to rise above it—to get ahead of it. And I know—I'm sure—that somewhere in your nature is that bigness. I get glimpses of it—in your writing sometimes and in your talk. But it seems stuck, somehow—it doesn't get expression. I'm afraid—dreadfully afraid that you're growing like your father—narrow-minded. And I can't stand it." Mrs. Hargraves spoke very earnestly.

"I wonder," said Edward dreamily.

"I'm getting sure of it; and I'm getting sure, too, that it is bound up with this insensibility of yours. You've been twenty-eight years in the world, and you haven't even made a beginning of understanding women."

"Oh, dear!" said Edward patiently.

"Oh, why don't you break out and—"

"What?" asked Edward, as she hesitated.

"Make an effort—flirt—*kiss* some-

body! Find some nice, live girl who wants to be kissed!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Edward heavily.

"But can't you see—to put it on the lowest grounds—that you can't make even a popular success as a novelist without a greater knowledge of women. Novels are written about women for women."

"Women—young women—do bore me so!" Edward almost wailed.

"Because you've only known the girl of the cathedral town—the Milchester girl. But surely in London you might have met some other types."

"Oh, I have! Billy's seen to that, all right!"

"And did none of them appeal to you?"

"Not one," said Edward firmly.

Mrs. Hargraves shook her head.

"Of course it's just cowardice," she said, in a somewhat hopeless tone. "You've been afraid of the sex all your life. Even as a little boy, I've noticed it in you. If only you'd been blessed with sisters—or with more cheek! But it's really time you made an effort."

"It takes up so much time," said Edward gloomily, and he dropped heavily into an easy-chair.

"Yes, but it isn't time wasted—never. A woman's man always succeeds in the world."

She looked at him in anxious appeal.

He shook his head. "You're wrong about my being afraid of women," he said. "I'm not. As a matter of fact, I've tried to flirt—tried hard—and I can't. Billy bullied me into making the effort; he said what you've just said about a knowledge of women being part of a novelist's equipment. I tried to flirt with a little girl in a restaurant he knew, and I made a howling mess of it. At the end of a week she positively loathed me."

"Poor Edward!"

"And, of course, I didn't stick at one effort. I made another a little while ago to see whether girls had improved at all. Billy and I took a couple of them on the river at Richmond. It was

about the most boring experience I've ever had—conversation all giggly."

"Were they *pretty* girls?" asked Mrs. Hargraves earnestly.

"Oh, I suppose so—in a fluffy, frilly way."

"Oh, my poor, dear boy!" she cried.

"But I'm not afraid of them. You're wrong there. They don't appeal to me."

"It sounds as if—as if you were not quite grown up, or else just asleep," she said slowly.

Edward sat up straighter in the easy-chair, and his eyes brightened.

"By Jove! I wonder," he said.

"That would be rather jolly, wouldn't it?"

He rose, crossed the room to the mirror in the charmingly carved gilt frame that hung on the opposite wall, surveyed himself, smiling, and said:

"The sleeping beauty—waiting for the princess."

Mrs. Hargraves laughed.

"But I want *you* to find *her*," she objected. "And, after all, the princesses do not seek the princes—"

"Shaw says they do," interjected Edward.

"And I'm so afraid that, while you're waiting, you'll turn into a prig; and then it will be too late. Oh, you must make an effort!"

"Wanted, a princess—wanted, a princess," chanted Edward, walking up and down in front of the mirror with a thoughtful frown puckering his brow.

His mother watched him anxiously. Suddenly he smote his thigh and cried: "I've got it!"

"What?" asked Mrs. Hargraves.

"Evangeline shall be the princess!"

"Evangeline?" repeated Mrs. Hargraves, somewhat blankly.

"Yes. I'll ask Evangeline to marry me. She shall do the awakening. There! Does that please you?"

"I—I—don't— Oh, it's not a bad idea," said Mrs. Hargraves, in a tone somewhat lacking in enthusiasm. "But you don't love Evangeline."

"No; that will come afterward. I shall tell her I don't."

"But you like her, don't you?"

"Oh, rather. She's always amiable.

I certainly don't know any girl I like better."

"And you're such old friends; and she's always been so fond of you," said Mrs. Hargraves, in an easier tone.

"Has she?"

"Yes. And, after all, she's one of those girls who always make successful wives even when they're merely marrying for marrying's sake," went on Mrs. Hargraves, in a tone of growing content. The arrangement was beginning to appear more and more satisfactory to her. Evangeline would come between her and Edward less than any one she could think of.

"Yes; she won't be at all intrusive, and she's always awfully clean and tidy," said Edward.

"She'll accept you. And bear in mind that even if you don't love her you've got to be interested in her."

"Of course. And I shall be interested in the whole business. The awakening will be extremely interesting—psychologically," said Edward eagerly.

"Ah—the awakening!" murmured Mrs. Hargraves, in a doubtful tone.

The telephone bell rang, and Edward went to it.

"Who is it?" he asked.

Holding the receiver to his ear, he stepped back and spoke to his mother.

"Talk of the dev—I mean the princess, and she's bound to appear. It's Evangeline!"

"Really?" exclaimed Mrs. Hargraves.

He stepped back to the telephone. "Yes," he said, "they came up yesterday. . . . Oh, we all went to Henley this afternoon. . . . Oh, gallant rescue? It wasn't anything of the kind. I just kept her from getting her hair wet. . . . No, I don't know her name. I don't want to. . . . Yes, she'll certainly know mine now—thanks to those idiotic newspapers. . . . Not she! Why should she write? . . . But there was nothing to be grateful for!"

"She seems deeply interested in your heroic action," said his mother.

"Heroic grandmother!" Edward interjected. "What? . . . Yes, do.

. . . When will you come? . . .

To-morrow afternoon—right you are!
 . . . Tea at four-thirty. . . .
 Yes, the mater will be here. . . .
 Oh, yes, it will be quite all right."

"She certainly *is* careful of the proprieties," said Mrs. Hargraves. Then of a sudden a whimsical smile wreathed her lips, and she added quickly: "Why don't you propose to her at once?"

"Good Lord! Over the telephone! . . . It's all right. I wasn't speaking to you, but to the mater."

"But it will be so much easier for you over the telephone," persisted his mother, still smiling mischievously.

"I suppose it will," agreed Edward, somewhat nervously.

"Yes; let me speak to her first," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"Don't ring off. The mater wants to speak to you," said Edward into the telephone, and he handed the receiver to his mother.

"How are you, dear?" asked Mrs. Hargraves into the telephone. "Oh, we had quite a pleasant journey. . . . Yes; very well. . . . Edward is going to—"

"Oh, come! You were joking, mater—joking!" cried Edward nervously.

"—ask you something," went on Mrs. Hargraves, without heeding his appeal. "Yes—now. . . . Oh, he'll tell you himself. . . . I do hope you'll say yes—some day. . . . Good-by!"

"You've gone and done it now!" groaned Edward.

"Oh, no, I haven't—not really," she said, holding the receiver. Edward took it, and she added: "I'll just put your socks away."

"You ought to stand by and help me out," wailed Edward.

"Oh, I can't propose for you. It isn't done," said Mrs. Hargraves, laughing.

She went into the bedroom—being careful, however, to leave the door open—and stood beside the chest of drawers, smiling at Edward's perturbed face. It was like his simplicity to imagine that you could propose, with any hope of a favorable answer, to a girl at the other end of a telephone; but an initial

rebuff would do him no harm whatever. Indeed, it would heighten considerably his interest in Evangeline.

CHAPTER IX.

"Are you still there, Evangeline?" asked Edward, and his voice did not ring at all assured.

"Yes, I'm here," came the answer, in a clear, rather hard voice.

"Good—I'm glad you're there," said Edward, and he looked round the room rather wildly—as if he were seeking help rather than inspiration.

"Well? What is it?" asked Evangeline.

"What's what?" said Edward, sparing for time.

"What is it you were going to ask me?"

"I'm just going to tell you—" began Edward, and paused again.

"Well?" said Evangeline patiently.

"Look here, Evangeline! I'm thinking of getting married—some day."

"You're feeling worried? Why?" asked Evangeline.

"Not worried—married!" cried Edward.

"Did you say married? You're getting rather indistinct," said Evangeline.

"Yes, married—m-a-r-r-i-e-d!" cried Edward, almost in a shout. "I want to get married; and you and I have known one another—I say, you and I have known one another for a long while. What do you think about it?"

"Think about what?" asked Evangeline, in a tone of some perplexity.

"Marriage," said Edward.

There was a pause.

"Are you there?" asked Edward.

"Yes, yes, I'm here," Evangeline answered, in a tone of some hesitation. "B-b-but are you—are you—*proposing*, Edward?"

"Yes, of course I am."

"Are you in earnest?" Evangeline inquired, in a tone of deep incredulity.

"Of course I'm in earnest. I think we shall get on splendidly together."

"This is rather sudden. But I always knew you would." Evangeline spoke as cooly as the instrument would permit.

"Oh, you did, did you?" said Edward, somewhat taken aback.

"Yes, a girl always does—only you're so shy."

Edward had a vague sense of having heard the words a thousand times. He laughed nervously.

"Yes, I am shy," he agreed.

"Well, Edward, of course we shall have to talk it over"—her voice had grown very coy, indeed—"but I will!"

"You will? Thank you very much. I mean, thank you for keeping me out of suspense," said Edward, somewhat incoherently.

Mrs. Hargraves gasped. "Little fool!" she muttered.

She was, indeed, taken aback. She had never for a moment dreamed that the matter would be settled with this swiftness; her suggestion of the telephone had been the merest jest. At the moment she did not know whether to be glad or sorry. From many points of view, Evangeline was an excellent match, but—

"Well, no; not exactly—not that passionate kind of thing," said Edward at the telephone. "But I respect you awfully; and we've always been such friends—and I want you to— Oh, well, it's settled, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes," said Evangeline. "And I prefer you like that. I always feel that that passionate kind of thing—the kind of thing you read about in books—isn't quite nice."

"No—quite so—quite so," Edward assented, in a tone of warm approval. He felt that to be passionate would be a severe strain on Evangeline.

"But it's difficult to explain over the telephone, isn't it? I shall see you tomorrow," said Evangeline.

"Yes; and I'm so glad it's all settled," said Edward. "Well, good night—er—er—dear."

"And what about your mother, Edward?"

"Oh, the mater will be delighted—and so will the pater. It was he who suggested it first."

"And you've forgotten something else, Edward," said Evangeline shyly.

"What's that?"

"The ring," she almost whispered.

"Of course. I was forgetting the ring. But you'll have to choose that yourself—something with diamonds in, I suppose."

"Oh, not diamonds, Edward. I always think they're so American. Sapphires—sapphires are so sweet."

"All right—sapphires. Good night—er—er—dear."

"Good night. I shall see you tomorrow," Evangeline chirped.

"Yes; about four."

"Wouldn't you like me to come round in the morning? It wouldn't quite do for you to come here. People would wonder, perhaps, as our engagement hasn't been formally announced."

Edward hesitated; then he said firmly: "No, I can't in the morning. I've got to see my agent."

"Very well—at four. Good night, dear," she cooed.

"Good night—er—er—dear," said Edward.

He rang off and looked round the room with a rather dazed air.

Mrs. Hargraves came quickly out of the bedroom.

"Well?" she inquired.

"She's done it!" said Edward faintly.

"Done what?" asked his mother.

"Accepted me," said Edward, and he rubbed his hands feebly together.

Disquieted as she was, Mrs. Hargraves could not help smiling at his perturbed face; he looked so utterly uncertain whether he was standing on his head or his heels.

"I congratulate you," she said, without showing the faintest sign of her own perturbation.

"It seems a bit sudden," said Edward doubtfully.

"Oh, I don't know. I think a woman ought to know her own mind."

"Yes—yes," agreed Edward, without enthusiasm.

"And why shouldn't the course of true love run smooth for once?" she added cheerfully.

"Perhaps it's running smooth because it isn't true love," murmured Edward.

"Oh, that's all right—that's coming—you said so," she said quickly and

with cheerful decision, though her heart sank again. "Besides, it isn't often that a novelist marries his own heroine. Evangeline is very like Hannah, you know."

"I suppose she is," said Edward, still without enthusiasm. "The funny thing is she seemed to be expecting it."

"Yes, yes; a woman's intuition," Mrs. Hargraves explained hastily.

"Um—do they always expect—I mean— Well, never mind. I've gone and done it now, old darling," said Edward more cheerfully.

His cheerfulness was the natural signal for his mother's hidden disquiet to find expression. Tears suddenly filled her eyes, and her voice broke as she said:

"Oh, my dear, I wish you knew a little more!"

"Why, mater, darling, whatever's the matter? Why are you crying?" He put his arm around her and kissed her.

"Never ask a woman that!" she cried.

"Why ever not?" asked Edward.

"Oh, bless the boy! Because she can't always tell you," she said, recovering herself and smiling through her tears.

She drew herself away from him, and sat down again in her easy-chair.

"After all, dear, I'm much easier in mind about you. Evangeline's better than no one." She spoke in the tone of one trying to comfort herself.

"I should jolly well think so!" said Edward, with firm conviction. Then, with less conviction, he added: "Evangeline's the awakening princess."

Mrs. Hargraves had in the depths of her heart the liveliest doubt that Evangeline was the awakening princess, and she regretted having suggested the telephone to Edward. But she told herself firmly that he was safer; that this engagement at least put him out of the reach of the wrong woman she had so feared.

He whistled two or three bars, without enthusiasm, of the wedding march from "Lohengrin."

"Oh, don't do that! That's so unlucky!" she cried.

"I suppose I shall have to clear out

of this. It's a jolly little flat." He spoke regretfully.

"Oh, yes; it's much too small. Besides, with your income and Evangeline's, you'll be able to afford a nice house in a nice neighborhood. After all, she has always that thousand a year. What was that?"

"What?"

"I thought I heard a noise—outside the window. I never feel safe with these fire escapes."

Edward went to the window and looked out.

"It's nothing," he said. "You'd feel a lot more nervous without it."

"My dear boy, I may be old-fashioned, but I'd far rather risk being burned than being burgled."

"Oh, nobody's going to burgle you. Your flat's not on the fire escape, you know."

"And I think I'll be getting up to it. All that excitement and fresh air have made me quite sleepy." She smothered a yawn.

"Well, perhaps an early night would be good for you. You'll be fresher for to-morrow. Come along," said Edward, opening the door.

He escorted her up to her flat, made sure that she had everything that she wanted, bade her good night, and left her.

Ann had had a restless hour of it, and the delay had grown almost unbearable. On hearing Mr. William Lloyd and the dean come down the stairs, she had thought that her hour had come, and had slipped quickly out of her window onto the fire escape, only to hear the murmur of the voices of Edward and his mother. She had returned disconsolately to her flat, opened the outer door of it, and tried to settle down to one of the books she was reviewing. It was no use; she kept looking from it to the watch on her wrist. She had made up her mind that she would have the interview with Edward Hargraves before eleven o'clock; and she saw the minute hand pass ten, the quarter past, and then the half hour, and could still hear the murmur in the sitting room above. Then, at a few minutes past

the half hour, she heard the outer door of Edward Hargraves' flat shut.

Her heart leaped in her, she sprang to her feet, ran to the window, and listened. The flat above was silent. She ran back to the little mirror over the mantel, dabbed at her hair, and shook out her skirt. Then she slipped out of the window, and, with her heart beating quickly, began to ascend the fire escape.

She went up it slowly, for it was inclined to creak, and she did not at all wish to be found by Edward Hargraves on the fire escape and to have to climb the rest of it, somewhat awkwardly, under his astonished eye. To her relief, she did not hear a sound in the flat. Her head came above the window sill, and she could see most of the room. But she could not see the novelist. He must be in the corner on her right. She went on, set a foot on the sill, crouched, and then, with a little scream, sprang into the room, and, with her skirts raised a little, ran across it.

The room was empty.

When she found that she was alone, she dropped her skirts, with a little laugh, and looked curiously about her. Her eyebrows rose a little as she surveyed the room. Sixteen Wellington Mansions had seemed to her an uncommonly good address for a commencing novelist; the luxury of the flat assured her that its tenant was a man of means as well as of taste.

Then she turned to his desk, the most intimate piece of furniture in the room, and the photographs of the dean and of Mrs. Hargraves caught her eye.

A short consideration of the portrait of the dean sufficed her. She dismissed it with a gentle, patronizing: "Dear old parson!"

But at Mrs. Hargraves' face she looked long and earnestly.

"What a fine face!" she said, under her breath, almost tenderly. "He—he must be all right if he takes after *her*!"

Then she caught sight of Evangeline's portrait on the mantelpiece, went to it quickly, and almost snatched it from its place. She had not expected to find the portrait of a girl in the sit-

ting room of the author of "Hannah's Honeymoon."

She looked at it as earnestly as she had looked at the portrait of Mrs. Hargraves; but, quite without knowing it, she was scowling. Then she put it back firmly in its place, and said, slowly and with the deepest contempt:

"Papa—potatoes—poultry—prunes—and prisms! So that's where he got his Hannah!"

She heard a dismal whistling on the stairs, dashed for the window, and slipped neatly out as the dismal whistling sounded in the hall.

CHAPTER X.

Edward came into the room whistling dimly one of the dirges in common use at funerals of Highlanders; Ann thought that it was "The Land of the Leal." It seemed a mournful tune for the lips of a rising young novelist; and, since the publisher's statement of accounts could not possibly have come in yet, she wondered what could be the cause of his depression.

It did not find expression only in his whistling. He had sat down in an easy-chair facing her, and, while he filled a pipe with listless fingers, he stared, frowning, straight in front of him with a gloomy preoccupation that changed presently to a childlike ruefulness that made her want to comfort him. She had an excellent view of his face, for he was looking, with unseeing eyes, straight at her; and she made up her mind not only that he was better looking than his photograph, but also that she might, as she had suspected, with perfect confidence interview him in his flat at one o'clock in the morning if need were.

When she had looked her fill, she screamed—not very loudly—sprang through the window, and screamed again.

Edward sprang to his feet. "Goodness!" he cried. "What's the matter?"

"A mouse! A horrid mouse! It chased me out of my room and up the fire escape!" cried Ann. "Oh, I hear it coming!"

She ran to the couch, jumped onto it, and twisted her skirt tightly round her, in full confidence that if she were—as she thought likely—displaying her ankles, they were everything that could be desired in the way of slenderness, and rose above uncommonly small feet.

Edward Hargraves looked at her flushed face, shining eyes, and parted lips as she panted and appeared to recover herself.

"It's all right," he said firmly. "You're safe here. If it enters this room, I kill it on the spot!"

He picked up the poker and brandished it as an earnest of his dauntless resolution, a little surprised himself at the ease with which he rose to the situation.

"B-b-but—you might m-m-miss it!" panted Ann.

"I never miss a mouse," said Edward firmly, and he went to the window and peered out.

"Ha! There he goes! He's not coming up at all; he's going down again; he's nearly reached the bottom," he announced untruthfully.

He desired to reassure her.

"Little beast!" said Ann, jumping off the couch.

He turned and faced her.

"I'm awfully sorry, disturbing you like this," apologized Ann, in a contrite tone. "But, you see, I had to."

"Of course you had!" said Edward, with a warmth of assent that surprised himself. "We all know how dangerous the bite of a mouse is."

"There wasn't any mouse," said Ann defiantly.

"No mouse?" cried Edward.

"No. I'm the interviewer."

"Good Lord!" said Edward.

"And I couldn't possibly come through that window in cold blood, could I? I had to have that mouse." Her tone was appealing.

"I—I—thought there was something familiar about your voice," said Edward faintly.

"You've heard it often enough. But that was your fault." There was a sudden note of injury in Ann's voice.

"Oh—er—well—I told you—it was

a matter of principle. Besides, I—er—er—I didn't know you were—er—er—like this," stammered Edward nervously.

"Why not? What's the matter with my voice?" asked Ann quickly.

"Nothing—nothing! It's—er—charming—quite all right!" cried Edward.

"I believe you were trying to make out that I had a horrid voice," said Ann, in a tone of cold suspicion.

"Nothing of the kind!" protested Edward.

"And besides the interview, there was another thing I had to see you about," Ann continued.

"Another thing?"

"Yes; about Henley."

"What about Henley?" asked Edward, in a tone of surprise.

"Do you mean to say you don't know?" cried Ann, surprised in her turn. "Perhaps if you were to throw a bucket of water over me you'd know me again."

"Good Lord! Do you mean to say that you're that girl, too—the girl in the punt?"

"Yes. At least, I'm the girl who was out of the punt. And I do want to thank you for pulling me out of the river."

"Oh, it was nothing!" protested Edward quickly.

"Nothing!" cried Ann, once more in an injured tone.

"For me, I mean! Nothing for me to do!" explained Edward. "But, of course, it was awful for you—perfectly awful. And I was very glad to be able to help."

"I am very much obliged to you," said Ann, in a grateful tone. She paused and added: "I suppose I looked awfully funny at the top of that pole?"

"No, I didn't see. I just jumped for you," said Edward.

"Yes, you were splendidly quick. Perhaps it was just as well." She laughed gently at the picture of herself that rose before her mind.

A sudden look of dark suspicion came over Edward's face.

"Look here!" he said, in the excited

tones of a discoverer. "I don't believe it was an accident!"

"What?" asked Ann, with a guileless air.

"That pole business."

"Oh! You'll be saying next that I'd drop my handkerchief!" cried Ann, in a tone of deeply scandalized reproach.

"No, that's just what you wouldn't do. You wouldn't drop your handkerchief, but you would throw yourself into a river." Edward still spoke in the tones of a discoverer.

"Now, that's the acutest thing you've ever said about a woman!" cried Ann, in accents of the liveliest surprise. "You are improving. How did you know that?"

"I don't know—intuition, I suppose."

"Yes, I was quite right; you will go a long way—with luck," said Ann, in a tone of thoughtful conviction.

"Oh, by Jove! You are 'A. A.' of the *Gadfly*! And you did write that review!" cried Edward.

"It's always possible. Did it make you very angry?"

"Angry? No—not at all. But it's just nonsense your saying I know nothing of women—absolute nonsense!"

"Perhaps—perhaps," said Ann calmly, and she sat down on the couch. "Have you ever been on a honeymoon?"

"Good Lord, no!"

"I'm glad of that."

"Why?"

"Because in that case there's some excuse for your ignorance."

"Oh, thank you!" said Edward, with some heat.

"But there's no excuse for your writing about a thing like a honeymoon if you've never tried it," added Ann firmly.

"Why ever not? An author has to draw on his invention sometimes," said Edward, with a somewhat pontifical air.

"Not about a honeymoon. It's a beautiful, sacred thing, a honeymoon; and for any one who hasn't been on one and doesn't really understand it to write about it—why—why, it's vandalism—just vandalism!"

"I thought you said you were Miss Anning, over the telephone. I didn't gather you were married," said Edward, in a tone of dissatisfaction.

"I'm not," Ann assured him hastily, flushing a little.

"Then how do you know about honeymoons?"

"Oh, I just *do* know—every woman knows! Why, a honeymoon is just as sacred and wonderful to me as a very beautiful new baby!" She sprang up suddenly and pointed a menacing finger at him. "Now, don't you ever dare to describe a baby till you've thoroughly mastered all its lovely points!" she cried vehemently.

"No, no, certainly not!" Edward promised readily.

"You're quite capable of it—you know you are," she said firmly, but with less vehemence, sinking back onto the couch again. "Remember you've really spoiled Hannah's honeymoon; you're not to spoil her baby, too."

"I won't," said Edward, in a tone that inspired trust. He observed that she used a scent he did not know, a delicate, subtle, seductive scent.

She looked at him earnestly, with searching eyes, for perhaps a minute and a half; then she said:

"You're almost exactly what I expected from your book."

"Thanks awfully," said Edward gloomily. "You don't seem to think much of it."

"But I do! In parts it's perfectly delightful!" cried Ann. "Why do you write so well and so badly?"

Edward sat down in the easy-chair facing her and shook his head.

"It's really extraordinary," she went on, frowning deeply. "And where on earth did you pick up that mass of muddled information about women?"

"I'm really beginning to think that there is something in what you said in your review. I don't know very much about women," said Edward more gloomily.

"It's self-evident," said Ann, in a tone of settled conviction. "But what bothers me is how you managed to reach

years of maturity in such appalling ignorance."

"Well, I seem to have done it—somehow."

"Have you—have you—ever kissed a girl?" she asked, flushing a little.

"I—well—er—"

"No; you haven't. It's no good your saying you have. I wouldn't believe you," she said.

"Why not?"

"Why, because you described a kiss—in 'Hannah's Honeymoon.' Let's see! How did it go—yes: 'His lips touched her cheek for one brief moment; and he knew that he had always loved her—would always love her.' It's—it's absurd!"

"Why, what's wrong with it?"

"A—a peck like that! Why it's childish! How could a peck like that reveal to a man a whole lifetime of love?" she cried scornfully.

"I don't quite see," said Edward, in the tone of a seeker.

"Why, don't you see that it was a long kiss that was wanted—a *real, long, thrilling kiss*—not a *peck*! A peck like that could reveal nothing at all!"

"Couldn't it, now?" asked Edward in the tone of one suddenly enlightened.

"No, baby; it couldn't."

She paused, looking at him with a gently protective air; then she added:

"But all the same I rather like you for it."

"Do you, now?" said Edward, in a more cheerful tone. "Why?"

"Never mind," she said, and flushed.

They were silent, gazing at each other. Edward was looking at her as if he was beginning really to see her. The flush deepened in her cheeks, and she said hastily:

"Another point that struck me: you make Hannah recover from a flood of tears before she's had time to enjoy half of it. She couldn't possibly have stopped—not when she was in that state—in less than ten minutes."

"Well, I'm certainly learning," said Edward, in a tone of satisfaction.

"You'd have learned ever so much more, ever so much quicker, if ever you'd been engaged."

"But I *am* engaged," announced Edward, with no great cheerfulness.

"You are?" Ann exclaimed, somewhat blankly.

"Yes; I got engaged to-night."

"Oh, then you'd already learned all I've been telling you about kissing," said Ann coldly.

"No, I hadn't. There wasn't any kissing."

"There wasn't any kissing?" Ann spoke in a tone of stupefaction.

"No. You see, there couldn't be. We got engaged over the telephone," Edward explained.

"The telephone! Oh—my—goodness!" gasped Ann; and she began to laugh, and laughed, and laughed.

Edward gazed at her in a bewilderment that presently changed to resentment.

At last she checked herself, and almost on the instant her face grew indignant.

"Do you mean to say you chucked away the finest, sweetest moment of your life on a beastly old telephone?" she said sternly.

"Well—er—yes. I suppose—now you come to speak of it—I did," said Edward sheepishly.

"And did she—the girl—let you do it?"

"Well, I suppose it was my fault."

"You mean it was all on the spur of the moment?" probed Ann, in the tone of an inquisitor.

"Exactly."

"But she did accept you?"

"Yes."

"Oh, you poor boy! You *have* gone and done it!" she cried, with genuine compassion.

"What on earth do you mean?" he said somewhat stiffly.

"You mean it's no business of mine. Well, it isn't. But, oh, can't you see— No; I've said too much already."

"Tell me. Can't I see what?" he demanded imperatively.

"A girl who'd say 'yes' over a telephone, unless she was dying—oh! What is she like?" said Ann, in a hopeless tone.

"She's—she's—— Well, here's her photograph—you can see for yourself." He sprang up and handed it to her from the mantelpiece.

She looked at it carefully, shifting it this way and that.

"Yes," she said. "She's got all five: 'Papa, potatoes, poultry, prunes, and prisms.' You poor boy, you have gone and done it! You'll write bad novels all your life now. Where does she live?"

"She—— But why on earth should I tell you?" said Edward in some irritation.

"Oh, don't—don't, if you'd rather not," said Ann carelessly. "Only I should have liked"—she looked at him in an odd fashion that made his heart quicken its beat—"I should have liked to help a—a—a promising writer to get on to the right way."

"But what could you do?"

"Nothing—unless, perhaps, I knew the facts," said Ann slowly.

"Oh, well, she's a canon's daughter—of Milchester—where we come from. I've known her all my life——"

"That may be an excuse, and again it mayn't," said Ann judiciously.

"It's rather narrowing, of course—Milchester. But she's an awfully nice girl, you know—thoroughly English." Edward spoke with moderate warmth.

"Of course she is." Ann made a queer face at Evangeline's portrait. "And you're in love with her?"

"Oh, well—I don't—I wouldn't go so far as to say that," said Edward quickly, without pausing to think. For some inexplicable reason, he was beginning to find Ann very unloosening to his tongue.

"You don't?" cried Ann, and there was a sudden bright flush on her face. "Then why—why on earth did you propose to her over that telephone?"

"Oh, well—er——" Edward paused, looking somewhat sheepish; then he came out with it frankly: "Well, to tell you the honest truth, it was my mother——"

"Your mother?" cried Ann.

"Yes. She's the finest woman I

know, mind you." There was a challenge in his voice.

"I'm sure she is. You'd be bound to have a very nice, clever mother," said Ann, in the tone of one dispassionately stating a scientific fact.

"She's very clever," he said. "Well, she'd been going for me about the book, saying very much the same as you—that I don't know anything about women; and I thought I'd better get engaged and start learning——"

Ann laughed. "Oh, that's perfectly lovely!" she cried. "The artist sacrificing himself to the cause of art!"

"It wasn't exactly that," protested Edward, smiling. "Only we agreed that I wanted waking up—that I—er—was a kind of—er—sleeping beauty. And I looked round for a princess—to wake me, you know."

"Oh, how delightful!" cried Ann, laughing again.

"And there was Evangeline, don't you know?"

"And you dashed to the telephone."

"Well, no. My mother suggested the telephone."

"Your mother must be a perfect dear, to pull your leg like that!" Ann exclaimed, with enthusiasm. "But don't you see what you've gone and done? You've gone and asked a—a sleeping beauty to wake you up. This girl"—she tapped the photograph against her knee—"can't help you. She's *asleep* herself. And, what's more, she always will be!"

"Oh, come! She's quite a *nice* girl," protested Edward.

"Yes; but you don't want a *nice* girl. You want—you want a *live* girl. I—I—almost said you wanted a hussy," said Ann, giving herself a little shake.

"Well, now, I think that's just what my mother was afraid of. She was afraid that I might get mixed up with the wrong woman."

"Light at last! That explains Evangeline!" cried Ann joyfully. "Evangeline is the safe haven. Oh, the unscrupulousness of mothers!" She paused, thoughtful; then she added: "But all the same, it wouldn't be the safe haven. Some day—you'd burst out—you'd be sure to. And all the

while she'd have been no use to you—ever."

"Well, I've done it—anyhow," said Edward firmly.

"And you'll stick to it?" asked Ann.

"Of course."

"And Evangeline will stick to it. There's no doubt about that," Ann went on, with thoughtful conviction. "Oh, it's so silly!"

"Oh, come! It'll work out all right," said Edward, in a tone that did not ring with hope.

"Work out all right, when you go and marry a girl who was born to marry a curate? Later on, when you get your wings really going—when you get on to something really big—you'll get jerky and nervy; and your—your Evangeline won't have the slightest notion how to help you; and you'll want understanding and sympathy so badly that you'll positively cry."

"Men don't cry," said Edward stoutly.

"You will," said Ann, with discouraging conviction. "And it is such a shame that your work is going to be all spoiled!"

"My work? But what about me?" said Edward ruefully.

"You poor boy!" said Ann, and her blue eyes rested on him very gently.

He found them very beautiful eyes. "You're very kind and sympathetic," he sighed.

"Something ought to be done; it ought really," she said, frowning in her effort to hit on a plan.

"There's no doubt that you're teaching me things about women."

"Oh, that's nothing," said Ann, a little impatiently, still cudgeling her brains.

There was silence, during which he watched her intent face with steady eyes. Presently he said:

"What a delightful scent that is you use!"

Ann seemed to awake from her thoughtfulness. She smiled at him.

"Oh, that scent?" she said. "It's my one extravagance. It costs me a guinea a bottle; and it's not a large bottle, either."

"Well, if it's your only extravagance, it's a very jolly one. What's it called?"

"Oh, dear, no! You'd go and give some to your Evangeline!" said Ann.

"Oh, no, I shouldn't," Edward protested. "I don't believe she uses scent at all. I never noticed it."

"Sweet, English girl! Well, she won't ever use this," scoffed Ann.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Edward, starting to his feet and pulling out his watch.

"What's the matter?"

"The time—I had forgotten all about it. Suppose the pater comes and finds you here?"

"Oh, joy—oh, rapture!" Ann spoke with supreme carelessness.

"Or suppose the mater came down for something?"

"Oh, she'd be extremely relieved—she'd just love it," said Ann, smiling at him.

"I really believe she would," said Edward thoughtfully.

"There! You see, you can learn about women, if you get the chance," cried Ann in a tone of triumph.

"With you for teacher," added Edward, in warmer accents.

"And what do you suppose your Evangeline would think if she could see us?"

"Goodness knows!"

"I know," said Ann, with decision. "She's be shocked—just ignorantly shocked. That's what a girl who'd say 'yes' over a telephone would be. She'd jump to conclusions like a very active kangaroo."

"I'm afraid you're right," said Edward gloomily.

"You certainly are learning about women," said Ann complacently.

"Yes; I am—thanks to you."

Ann rose.

"Well, I must be going," she said.

"Oh, no—not just yet," protested Edward. "My father won't be back yet a while; and I want to go on learning."

"I must. I want to write your interview while you're fresh in my mind," said Ann.

"Good heavens! You're never going to write——"

"But of course I am." Ann smiled at him mischievously. "It's been a most interesting——"

There came the sound of a hearty sneeze from the landing and the sound of a footfall in the hall.

"Good Lord! It's the pater!" cried Edward.

"Goodness!" cried Ann.

The window was in front of her, right across the room; on her left was a door. She made one spring to it.

"It's my bedroom!" gasped Edward.

Ann wrenched open the door, sprang inside, and shut it quietly behind her, as the dean entered the sitting room.

CHAPTER XI.

The dean entered, benevolent and beaming.

"Hullo! Did you have a good time?" asked Edward quickly. "Would you like a whisky and soda?"

He went hastily to the cupboard in which he kept them. The churchman of the world failed to observe his strained tones and perturbed air. He said:

"Thank you, my dear boy; I should. London is a very thirsty place."

He sat down on the couch on which Ann had been sitting and beamed firmly.

"And how did you like the Cabaret Club?" asked Edward, setting the whisky and soda on the table, keeping his guilty face turned away from his father as he did so.

"Well, it was curious—very curious," said the dean in measured tones. "The pictures on the wall are cubist."

"And did you like them?"

"Well, not very much," said the dean thoughtfully. "They seemed to me very easy to do. In fact, with a little practice, I could do them myself."

"I'm sure you could," said Edward, pouring out the whisky.

"There was one of a man being hanged."

"A very cheery sight at supper," said Edward, handing his father the whisky and soda.

"Yes, yes. But also it was a very

crude and immature work of art," said the dean.

"And what were the people like?"

"Oh, they were quiet—quite quiet at first. They listened to the singing quite quietly. They were all sober," added the dean, with an air of judicial impartiality.

"Was the singing good?" continued Edward, firmly keeping the talk going.

"It was in German. Er—er—Billy said that they dealt with life in the raw," said the dean. "But I don't understand German."

"Were their voices good?" Edward persisted.

"Well, they were rather harsh."

"Raw life in German rendered by harsh voices? Well, I don't wonder you came away."

"Oh, it wasn't that—it wasn't that," the dean explained hastily. "It was a young lady—at least she had the accent and intonation of a lady. She—er—she wanted to dance on the table."

"And didn't she?"

"No—no. Her friends dissuaded her. But I thought I had better go; and—er—er—Billy agreed with me. He said that it might be growing rowdy. So he put me into a taxi. I think he went back."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Edward.

The dean sniffed, and then he sniffed again.

Suddenly Edward remembered the great event that had happened that evening.

"You'll be interested to hear, sir, that I'm engaged to Evangeline," he announced brusquely and a trifle stiffly.

"God bless my soul! You don't say so?" exclaimed the dean, rising quickly, and coming to him. "My warmest congratulations, my dear boy—my warmest congratulations!"

He seized Edward's hand and shook it warmly.

"Thank you, sir," said Edward, without any great enthusiasm, and his hand was limp in his father's grasp.

"I'm indeed thankful—and I'm sure your mother is thankful, too—for this sudden and hardly expected fulfillment

of our dearest wishes," the dean went on.

"I thought you said, before you went out with Billy, that there was plenty of time," said Edward, somewhat glumly.

"Did I? Ah, yes; to be sure I did. But I'm pleased—very pleased—that it has been settled so soon. Did you go round and see Evangeline?"

"No; I asked her over the telephone," Edward explained gloomily.

"Excellent—excellent!" approved the dean. "What should we do without these recent inventions of science?"

"Yes—of course," said Edward, still more gloomily, thinking how differently the same thing struck different people.

"Evangeline is a girl with a thous—I mean in a thousand," said the dean, with firm emphasis.

"She is," agreed Edward.

"And her income with yours— But there, I must not expatiate on these loaves and fishes—they are there; suffice it to know they are there—in the face of love's young dream."

"But it isn't quite that. I'm afraid I don't love Evangeline in quite the— the—conventional sense," Edward put in hastily.

"Oh, that's all right—that's quite all right. I and your mother, too, quite appreciate your difficulties—difficulties inherited possibly from myself. Between ourselves—entirely between ourselves—I never loved your mother in quite the conventional sense. But look at the result."

Edward smiled faintly, a somewhat wry smile.

"Harmony—complete harmony, based on common sense and daily intercourse," continued the dean, warming to his subject.

"I wonder——" Edward began.

But the dean cut him short, saying in his best pulpit voice:

"Intimacy—intimacy, my dear boy, is the soil for a common-sense marriage. In intimacy the little seed of love takes root slowly and surely. In intimacy it burgeons and blossoms forth like a grain of mustard seed."

"Yes, sir. But—but you said all that

last Sunday," said Edward reproachfully.

"Did I? Did I, now? Well, I suppose I had you in mind at the time," said the dean. "But there; it's late to be discussing the ethics of love and marriage. We'll postpone the discussion till you and Evangeline have grown a little more intimate. Now, I must be going to bed."

He finished his whisky and soda, set the glass down on the table, sniffed, and said: "Dear me! What a delicious perfume there is in this room!"

"Is there?"

"Yes; delicious. I never noticed it before I went out." He sniffed again.

"It must be that new hair wash I'm trying," said Edward deceitfully.

"Hair wash? My dear boy, I must try it. It's delicious. Could you let me have a little? I suffer from a slight dryness of the scalp," said the dean eagerly; and he took a step toward the door of the bedroom.

Edward headed him off firmly.

"I'm afraid it's no use for that, sir," he said, still deceitfully. "It's used—to—to correct the moisture of the scalp—to dry it."

"That's a pity—a great pity. Such a delicious fragrance! Well, good night, my boy—good night."

"Good night, sir," said Edward, in a tone of relief, as he got his father over the threshold of the sitting room.

At the outer door of the flat the dean paused to ask: "You're quite sure that that hair wash does induce dryness?"

"Quite sure—quite," said Edward with decision.

"A pity—a great pity! I must get your dear mother to try it first. Good night, my boy, good night."

Edward watched him halfway up the stairs; then, with a deep sigh of relief, he shut the door. The latch could not be opened from the outside; but that was not enough for him. He stooped and shot the bolt at the bottom of the door.

Then he went briskly back to the sitting room. As he entered it, Ann opened the bedroom door and faced him, smiling.

"That *was* a shave!" he said in a low voice.

"However came you to leave the door of your flat open?"

"Carelessness—sheer carelessness! And, of course, I never expected a visitor by the fire escape. I'm awfully sorry if it gave you a shock." He spoke penitently.

"Oh, no; it didn't give me any shock. In fact, it was most useful. I got a lot of copy I should never have had otherwise," said Ann amiably; and she smiled as she sank down into her old position on the couch.

"Copy?" repeated Edward faintly.

"Yes; English author's bedroom. It's the kind of thing they love in the States, you know." She pulled out a little notebook, and, consulting it, continued: "'Doesn't use a comb. Doesn't use hair wash. Doesn't get his clothes pressed often enough.' There's a large clothes-pressing industry in the States, you know."

"No, I don't!" growled Edward.

"Well, there is," said Ann amiably, and from her notebook she read on: "'Boots very badly cleaned.' You don't do it yourself by any chance?"

"Certainly not!" snapped Edward.

"Bootblacking is an art in the States," said Ann, smiling sweetly at him. She read on: "'Doesn't wear sleeping suit.' I say, you must look sweet in that flannelette nighty!"

"Look here! This is outrageous!" cried the fuming Edward.

"Not outrageous exactly—old-fashioned," said Ann, with unimpaired sweetness. "I like you when your eyes flash. But don't get letting them flash at your sweet English Prunes and Prisms, or you'll catch it."

"Don't you think you'd better be going?" Edward inquired, with cold, almost bitter, politeness.

"You asked me to stay yourself!" cried Ann indignantly. "And you certainly would wear sleeping suits if I married you!"

"Don't be indelicate!" said Edward, with some heat, and he blushed.

"Evangeline probably won't mind."

"Well, I'm——" began Edward.

"But that flannelette nighty——"

"It's not flannelette—it's flannel!" burst out Edward, with yet greater heat.

"Well, *flannel* nighty—is really an immense discovery. It makes the real, human appeal to the feminine heart. It will sell an extra two thousand copies of 'Hannah's Honeymoon' at least. It will be in scores of papers in the States——"

"Damn the States!" cried Edward fervently.

"Oh, hush! And the poor States craving for my interview with you," reproached Ann.

"I say, you're not really going to put all those ridiculous details in?" said Edward, in a less violent tone.

"But of course I am!" cried Ann. "It's business—business for you as well as for me. I'm a woman; you can't expect me to be sentimental in business."

"You *are* a woman! There's no doubt about that," said Edward bitterly.

Ann clapped her hands. "You're beginning to see it!" she cried in a tone of the liveliest delight.

Edward gazed at her in a gloomy perplexity.

They were silent a little while. Ann put her notebook into her wrist bag, took from it a long scent bottle, which she hid in the palm of her hand, let a few drops trickle from it on to the cushion, and said very seriously:

"What you said about my being indelicate—you don't really mean that? You don't think I don't know what true delicacy is?"

Her appealing eyes seemed to have grown larger, and the corners of her lips drooped a little.

Her sudden pathetic air smote Edward's heart, and he cried:

"Oh, no—no! I spoke in a hurry." She looked at him gravely, earnestly. "I tell you what—I should like you to meet my mother," he added impulsively.

"And I should like to meet her—very much," said Ann.

"Well, can't you come in to-morrow afternoon?"

"It would be nice. But—shouldn't I want explaining, rather?"

"Explaining? No. Send up your card and ask for an interview. My father and my mother, too, would be ever so pleased to see me interviewed."

"I suppose they would," said Ann thoughtfully. "And their feeling like that about you makes it all the more odd that they should have let you go and tie yourself up with Evangeline."

"Oh, Evangeline's all right." There was no great warmth in his tone, however.

"Perhaps, but not for you. Is she going to be here to-morrow?"

"Yes."

"Then I will certainly come," said Ann quickly. "I should love to see the girl you're—you're *not* going to marry."

"*Not* going to marry?" exclaimed Edward in some astonishment.

"No; not if all the resources of modern journalism have to be strained to save you," announced Ann with decision. "But I must be going."

She went briskly to the window.

"Wait—wait a minute," said Edward quickly. "Why are you so eager to do this for me?"

Ann stepped through the window and leaned in, smiling.

"Oh, there's the interests of literature. Besides——" She stopped and smiled a provoking smile.

"Yes? Besides?" asked Edward eagerly.

"Oh, well, some people have all the luck—I may marry you myself!"

She vanished, laughing.

CHAPTER XII.

Edward dashed to the window and looked down the fire escape in time to see Ann vanish into the window of her flat. She did not look up. He walked slowly to the middle of the room and looked around it with a somewhat dazed air. Then he walked slowly to the mantelpiece, and, taking up a favorite pipe, filled it slowly, staring the while with unseeing eyes at the portrait of Evangeline.

He lighted the pipe, looked around the room again, and sighed. He had

made the sudden discovery that a bachelor's is a lonely lot.

Then he frowned. He had remembered that Evangeline was about to ameliorate his lonely lot.

He began to pace up and down the room, wearing a very gloomy air. Suddenly he sniffed; the air of gloom lightened for a little and he almost smiled. Then the gloom settled down on him darker than ever. He mixed himself a whisky and soda, and drank it funereally. He finished it, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and strode, rather than walked, into his bedroom. It seemed to him that it, too, was fragrant with the presence of Ann. It is not improbable that she had spared a little of her scent for it also. But even that did not lighten his gloom; he went to sleep sulkily.

Ann entered her flat flushed and smiling. Then the smile faded, and she stood reflecting with a faint air of doubt on her face. Perhaps she had gone too far in her last sentence.

Presently she gave herself a little shake and smiled again defiantly. It had been her deliberate purpose to disturb Edward's peaceful spirit, and she had disturbed it.

She sat down in an easy-chair to think it over at her ease; and she thought it over, smiling at first, and then frowning. She had not been disappointed by the interview. She had perceived the potentialities of Edward's mind and spirit in his book; and though he had been at a disadvantage throughout their meeting, it had not at all weakened her belief in him, while it had deepened her belief that he was unawakened to life and love.

Moreover, he had an even finer face than his photograph had promised; naturally it had not given the full value of his eyes. Now that she had seen him and talked with him, she was surer than ever that, with the right woman to help develop his deeper and more intense emotions, he would grow into an uncommonly fine man, doing the fine work that is really valuable to the world.

Over these considerations she had smiled, faint, musing smiles of pleasant reminiscence. It was at this point that she began to frown. His life was not destined to be intensified and heightened by the right woman; here he was about to be yoked with the ideal narrow-minded, unpleasant wife of the curate of a country parish!

In the picture she had earlier made in her mind of the author of "Hannah's Honeymoon" and his environment, there had been no Evangeline. The book had given her so strong a sense of the author's aloofness from women that to find him thus preempted had been something of a shock. It could not be, she told herself with considerable emphasis, that she wanted him herself, since she had made his acquaintance only a few minutes before learning that he was engaged to be married, so that there had been no chance at all for any deeper interest in him to awaken in her. This made it all the more remarkable that her impersonal irritation at this unfortunate engagement should be so violent.

She thought of Evangeline's thin, un-kissable lips and pointed, obstinate chin with the liveliest bitterness. How a girl like that would blunt his finer instincts! How she would blight the finer aspirations of his soul! Probably, with her, he would never awaken at all, and the world would be an everlasting loser by his sleep. A girl who would accept a man over the telephone! Ann's lips curled in an ineffable scorn, and then she scowled darkly. Why, it was treachery to their sex!

Yet, after all, that was not without its bright side. Even though she was so plainly the ideal stockish curate's wife, she could not really care for Edward, to accept him like that! If she had, she must have put him off till he could ask her face to face. And that was a good thing; it made his rescue entirely justifiable. However fond of him Evangeline might have been, he would still have had to be rescued from her. It was so much to the good that only her vanity and not her deeper feelings would be hurt. Indeed, it was very

unlikely that she had any deeper feelings. He should be rescued!

She heaved a deep sigh of relief at having finally made up her mind that he should be rescued; and the decision that she was the person to rescue him followed immediately. But the frown did not lift at once from her face; she was considering the extreme difficulty of the rescue. For all that, it was plain that Evangeline could not care—really care—for him, she did not look at all the kind of girl to let him go without a violent struggle. Assuredly, it would be no use to go to her and try to make clear to her the grounds on which she must let him go—that she would merely be a hindrance to him, cramping his development. Probably it would be impossible to make her understand; and if she were made to understand, it was far from unlikely that she would consider the cramping of his finer, more generous instincts a truly laudable process. It was plain, indeed, that his rescue could be effected only by heroic measures.

Ann sat on frowning for a while, as heroic measure after measure suggested itself, only to be rejected. She could not discover the right one. Altogether, she had given a good half-hour to the sad case of Edward when she gave herself a little shake, rose, and went briskly to the writing table. The sooner she wrote and dispatched that interview, the better.

It would have done very well to write it and cable it next morning; but Ann did not do her work like that. She knew that the American editor liked things doing forthwith; to get that interview written and dispatched that night would be counted unto her as efficiency. They would value her for hustling for the paper. Besides, she did not wish to take any chances. Edward Hargraves had been surprised into that interview; it was possible that he might be surprised into another, and that one reach New York within a few hours of her own, and so the *Courier* would lose the scoop. It was, indeed, only a little scoop; but scoops are scoops.

She worked at it slowly, carefully—

sometimes smiling as the happy phrase came to her, sometimes frowning in her effort to find the happy phrase—for more than an hour. In the end she had it very much to her liking—quite as much to her liking as she had any right to expect. She folded it, slipped it into an envelope, and rose with a sigh of content. She put on a hat, hurried down the stairs, and bade the night porter of the Mansions whistle her a taxicab.

He regarded her with manifest surprise, for he was hardly used to young and pretty tenants of the flats dashing out into London at one o'clock in the morning. Ann did not miss his surprise; and since, when the taxicab came, he went down the steps and opened the door for her, she was careful to raise her voice as she told the chauffeur to drive to the office of the *New York Courier* in Fleet Street. The porter returned to his chair in the hall with his mind at ease.

Along the empty streets the taxicab took her to the office of the *New York Courier* in a little more than five minutes. Ann paid the driver and mounted the stairs in the cheerful spirit of one who knows that she will be welcome to an editor. Had it been earlier in the evening, she would have cabled the interview herself; but her instructions were that after the rush hours she was to take anything that was to be cabled to the office itself, to be sent over the paper's private wire.

The office boy recognized her with a wide-mouthed smile, and made haste to take in her name to Mr. Limasson, the London editor; and he called through the door to her to come in. She went in briskly. Mr. Limasson, a man of forty-five, wearing the worn and weary air that comes from years of dyspepsia, greeted her with a faint cheerfulness.

"I've brought the interview with Edward Hargraves," she explained, "the author of 'Hannah's Honeymoon.' Mr. Willett cabled me to get it and cable it out. I only got it late this evening, and I've only just written it up; so I brought it to the office to be sent over your own wire."

"By Jove! You've got that interview, have you?" cried Mr. Limasson, and his face brightened as he pressed the button that summoned the telegraph operator. "Well, there's no doubt about it: Angels rush in where fools are fain to tread."

He enjoyed a reputation for being epigrammatic, and missed few opportunities for showing how well he deserved it.

"That's a very nice way of putting it," said Ann, smiling at him.

"No; it's the cold, cold truth," he said.

The telegraph operator bustled in, and Mr. Limasson handed him the interview.

"Send this off at once, Mr. Jenkins, please," he ordered.

"And may I have the copy back when you've done with it? It will save me a lot of trouble when I write it for the *Gadfly*," said Ann, who never did her work twice over if she could help it.

"Certainly. Post it off to Miss Anning as soon as you've dispatched it, Mr. Jenkins."

Mr. Jenkins hurried out of the room with the manuscript; and Mr. Limasson continued:

"Parkins and Harrington will both be pretty sick at your wiping their eye like this. They've both had a shot at that interview and missed it."

"Oh, I had the luck," said Ann quickly, for she always stood by a colleague.

"You made the luck, you mean. You got at Hargraves all right."

"Not till he'd saved me from drowning at Henley."

"Oh, that was you, was it?" said Mr. Limasson quickly. "We cabled that out earlier in the evening."

"Yes; it was I," said Ann. "And if he'd saved Mr. Parkins or Mr. Harrington from drowning, one of them would have got an interview with him."

"Yes; but they never gave him the chance."

"Well, don't scold them too severely," said Ann, smiling at him.

"I shan't scold them. I shall just let

the anguish of having their eyes wiped sink in. But I'm very much obliged to you for getting us this interview; and I'll cable them to feature it under your name in our literary pages."

"Oh, thank you!" cried Ann warmly.

"Not at all. We must do all we can for contributors who are ready to drown for the paper. That rescue wasn't a real accident, I'll swear."

"Well, perhaps it might have been avoided if Mr. Hargraves hadn't been handy," said Ann demurely.

"I knew it," said Mr. Limasson, pleased with his discernment. "Well, next time I want something difficult done, I shall know where to go."

Ann thanked him again, and took leave of him. She went out into Fleet Street, pleased with her success, and a taxicab carried her quickly back to her flat. The night porter was yet more relieved by her returning so soon.

She made herself a cup of chocolate, and over it considered carefully again the character of Evangeline. The longer she considered, the plainer it grew that the methods of the liberator would have to be heroic.

CHAPTER XIII.

Edward awoke in a mood of mingled exhilaration and oppression to which he was quite unused; and since, as a rising young novelist, he was naturally interested keenly in his own emotions, he gave this mood his most earnest attention. Life had certainly grown far more significant and important for him since the night before; he was very clearly aware of that. It made the oppression on his spirit all the more remarkable. After careful consideration of the strange phenomenon, he was forced to the painful conclusion that it was the result of his engagement to Evangeline.

He did not go to the length of discovering the source of his exhilaration in his meeting with Ann; as an engaged man, he could not permit himself such a depth of introspection. It was enough to know that he was greatly dis-

turbed in spirit, and that the disturbance was not wholly unpleasant.

The faint fragrance of the subtle and seductive perfume Ann used hung still on the air of his bedroom, and he found it pleasantly troubling. Also, he could not but ascribe to its stimulation the extraordinary vividness with which her charming and piquant face kept rising before his mind. When, after making his toilet, he came into his sitting room, he found that there also it lingered on the air. While it increased his new interest in life, it did nothing, subtle as it was, to soothe his disturbed spirit.

After breakfast he found himself hesitating about lighting his pipe, lest the smoke should destroy this fragrant witness to the presence of Ann. He found it really difficult to make up his mind about it, till in the end he had to take himself severely to task for his sentimentality; since Evangeline was not the object of it, it was utterly out of place in her betrothed. He lighted his pipe with a gloomy resignation.

Doubtless it was the admirable view of the backs of the buildings in Dover Street that caused him to sit by the open window to smoke it; and from the persistence with which he kept looking down the fire escape, it was plain that he found its structure of the most fascinating interest.

He saw nothing of Ann, and he was somewhat surprised by the fact, for he had expected her to lean out of her window when she took her morning view of the prospect from it. Yet there was really no reason for surprise, as she was still sleeping. In the matter of sleep she was very strict with herself; she made a point of always sleeping for eight hours, no matter at what time she went to bed. Since she had gone to bed at two, it was her duty to sleep till ten. The result of this severity was that she not only looked fresh and unjaded always, but that she always came to her work with her brain fresh and unjaded.

When his pipe came to an end, Edward heaved a sigh and rose. He looked at his desk with considerable disfavor; he resented its obvious, almost blatant,

invitation to him to come to work. At the moment his mind was full of matters far more important than work. None the less, he did go to it and sit down, but only for two minutes, while he made out a short list. If he went shopping without having made a list of what he wanted, he so often forgot to buy the most important thing of all.

He then looked out of the window, sighed, went to his bedroom, and put on his shoes. He then looked out of the window of his sitting room.

He went upstairs to the flat in which his father and mother were staying, to bid them good morning. He found them at breakfast, and sat down in an easy-chair. The dean, forgetting that Edward's engagement was a purely common-sense affair, rallied him gently on his disturbed slumbers and pleasant dreams. Edward received the rallying gloomily, but, for the rest, he showed himself in very good spirits, and took part cheerfully in the discussion of their plans for the day.

They decided that they would go to the Tate Gallery in the morning, lunch at Prince's, and spend an hour at the Academy before coming to tea with him. Edward agreed to lunch with them at Prince's, but excused himself from going with them to the Academy on the ground that he would be making the preparations for tea. He tried to hide from himself the fact that his refusal was based on the hope that if he were in his rooms, he might see something of Ann before tea.

That arranged, he took his leave of them till lunch time. He left his mother somewhat puzzled. She had expected confidently to find him in a diffident and subdued mood that morning, after the plunge he had taken the night before; but here he was, excited and alert, wearing an air of pleasant expectancy. When her bewilderment had worn off a little, she was pleased to find that she had been wrong in her expectation, and to perceive that, so far from depressing him, his engagement to Evangeline was having a really bracing effect on him.

Edward went back to his flat and

looked out of the sitting-room window. Then he sighed, took his hat and cane, and set forth to shop.

He did not go down by the lift, but by the stairs, slowly. On the floor below his own he stopped at the head of the stairs to untie his shoe laces and tie them up again more neatly. For all he gained by it he might as well have gone straight down by the lift. No Ann appeared, and he heard no sound of any one moving in her flat. This was still not surprising, as it was only ten minutes to ten.

He came out of Wellington Mansions reluctantly and took a taxicab to the Army and Navy Stores. As a churchman, his father had naturally dealt there since their foundation, and Edward had simply and without thought followed in his footsteps. In less than five minutes he had bought a worthy trouser press. He found that it could not be delivered at Wellington Mansions till the afternoon; he decided, therefore, to take it with him. He was longer in finding silk sleeping suits of the exact colors that suited him best; and when he had bought them, he had an uneasy feeling that, as Ann had suggested, they would be wasted on Evangeline. This feeling set him to wondering whether Ann had been serious in saying that she proposed to break off the engagement, and whether she was likely to succeed in the attempt.

He told himself with considerable severity that he would permit nothing of the kind.

These matters seemed to him fraught with such extreme importance that he stopped in front of a counter loaded with expensive fancy articles, to consider them; and gradually his air grew gloomy and a trifle distracted. It was this that awoke the suspicion of one of the leading, but thick-nosed, detectives of the establishment.

When, having come to the virtuous resolve not to permit Ann to rob Evangeline of him, Edward roused himself from his abstraction and took his way to the hosiery department, the detective followed him with the gait of a sleuth-

hound and an air of carefully subdued eagerness.

His suspicions were deepened by Edward's utter failure to find matching socks and ties of sufficient delicacy of hue to suit his suddenly fastidious taste. There were ties of hues he could bear and socks of hues he could bear, but the hues were not the same. The detective found his exacting demands suspicious indeed, and watched him with the eyes of a lynx in the instant expectation of seeing him pocket a tie or a pair of socks. His suspicions were not allayed by Edward's purchase of a stout comb in another department.

Accordingly, he came down in the lift with the suspect and accompanied him to the department in which perfumes were sold. There Edward's pertinacity in his search for the perfume to which Ann had introduced him, and even more his failure to find it, deepened his suspicions yet more; every moment he expected him to pocket a bottle of eau de Cologne. Edward, however, continued to disappoint him. None the less, the detective accompanied him to the door of the stores, and was deeply bewildered by his departure with no more of the company's property than a comb and a large parcel for which he had manifestly paid.

Edward returned straight to his flat with the trouser press, went straight to his sitting-room window, and looked earnestly out of it. Seeing and hearing nothing that greatly interested him, he put three pairs of trousers in the press and screwed it very tight. Then he felt that after the tiresome labor of shopping he needed a pipe, and he sat at the window to smoke it. The smoke made him cough a good deal, and he whistled, with no conspicuous attention to harmony, parts of three tunes. But he saw and heard nothing of Ann.

He went to his agent's in a disappointed spirit, and, to the agent's surprise, took a gloomy view of his future as a novelist. The agent was used rather to clients who took too roseate views of their futures as novelists.

On his way back to Wellington Mansions, Edward stopped his taxicab at

the bottom of Bond Street and walked up it with a coldly resolute air. Here he was successful in finding matching ties and socks of the delicate hues his new fastidiousness demanded.

Encouraged by this success, he essayed once more to find the perfume. But in this, though he made a careful examination of the wares of two shops, he failed.

He found the lift somewhat slow in reaching his landing, and hurried from it, swiftly and with a quickly beating heart, to the window of his sitting room. A brief glance at the prospect assured him that there had been no grounds for his impatience. He screwed the trouser press tighter, viciously.

When, however, he unpacked his new ties and socks, their delicate and satisfying hues soothed him somewhat. He put on the prettiest tie and the socks that matched it, and was still more soothed.

It was only half past twelve. There was still an hour before he need start for Prince's, and he came reluctantly to the conclusion that there was no valid reason why he should not do some work. He sat down to it with admirable firmness, and found that, so far as his work went, the sense of stimulation with which he had awakened that morning still persisted; his ideas were flowing uncommonly freely. At the same time he did not get on with it very fast; he was so often interrupted by the necessity for looking out of the window.

At a quarter past one there came a ring at the door of his flat, and, opening it, he found Mr. William Lloyd on the threshold.

"I came to see if you were going out to lunch," said Mr. William Lloyd. "Business brought me to what is vulgarly known as the West End, and it was but a step to your lift."

"I'm lunching with my people at Prince's. You'd better come along," said Edward.

"Prince's? Me? In these clothes? I am an honest British artist dressed for honest work, not for reveling early in the afternoon in luxurious cosmopoli-

tan restaurants," said Mr. William Lloyd with a very virtuous air.

Then of a sudden his eyes brightened and grew keen as he looked at Edward more closely. He took him firmly by the arm, led him into his sitting room into a good light near the window, and looked at him again. Then he said:

"A new tie—socks to match it—oh, is this bohemian, I ask!—and worse still, a new light in the eye! I hold a changed man in my hand." He shook Edward gently. "What have you been doing? Surely—surely—you have never been going it!"

Edward as a rule bore patiently with the peculiar ways of Mr. William Lloyd, but to-day he said rather impatiently:

"Don't talk rot!"

"Rot? Rot? You *are* changed," said Mr. William Lloyd with unabated firmness. "You might deceive the eye of an honest British artist, but not the eye of a man of the world. Out with it, brave boy! What have you been doing?"

Edward saw no reason to conceal his changed estate from his friend.

"Well, as a matter of fact, I'm engaged to be married," he said.

"Engaged to be married!" cried Mr. William Lloyd, for once shaken from his worldly serenity. "By Jove, this is sudden!"

CHAPTER XIV.

"Engagements are generally sudden, aren't they?" said Edward coldly.

"Many are, but not as sudden as this. At ten o'clock last night your heart was entirely unaffected; nay more, you were the *ingenuus puer*, ignorant of women, deaf, blind, and dumb—especially dumb—to their charms. Fifteen hours later I find you giving yourself distinct airs on the strength of being engaged to be married. Sudden? Nothing could be more sudden. Deducting the requisite eight hours for sleep and another for your toilet and breakfast, you have performed a whole successful wooing in six hours," said Mr. William Lloyd, with a cold mathematical precision that Edward found somewhat grating.

"Oh, if you look at it like that!" he said.

"But of course I look at it like that—gasping with amazement. How did you do it in the time?"

With any one else, Edward would have been uncommonly short, but from Mr. William Lloyd he had no secrets. Indeed, so close was their friendship, that they practically took it in turns to act as each other's mentor.

"Well, it was really quite natural," he said. "After you and the governor had gone off cabareting last night, the mater and I had a long talk. It all sprang out of your absurd fancy that I knew nothing about women."

"Not so absurd, neither," said Mr. William Lloyd, ungrammatical, but calm.

"And the result of it was that I proposed."

"When?"

"Then, of course—last night."

"But who to?" asked Mr. William Lloyd, perplexed, and still ungrammatical.

"To Evangeline, of course—Evangeline Lipscombe," said Edward, with some impatience.

"But how on earth did she come to blow in at that hour of the night?"

"Oh, well—she didn't blow in exactly." Edward hesitated as he was assailed by sudden doubt about the way in which Mr. William Lloyd would, as an expert in affairs of the heart, receive the account of his proposal by telephone.

"Oh, you went straight off to her," said Mr. William Lloyd, the perplexed frown clearing from his brow.

"No, I didn't."

"Oh, you went this morning?"

"No; I haven't exactly—seen her at all," said Edward, still halting in his painful tale.

"Oh, you've been humbugging all the time. Well, I'm bound to admit you've had me fairly. But it was rather a shock all the same. After all my grand passions, my heart isn't—"

"I'm not humbugging! I am engaged!" cried Edward. "I—I—used the telephone."

A look of blank amazement filled the mobile face of Mr. William Lloyd.

"You—used—the telephone—to propose?" he asked faintly.

"Yes, I did," said Edward rather loudly.

"Oh, you amateurs!" said Mr. William Lloyd in a tone of deep feeling.

"Oh, well, hang it all! We've known one another all our lives!" protested Edward.

"And she accepted you?"

"Yes."

Mr. William Lloyd shook himself, drew himself up to his full height, plainly pulled himself together with an effort, and said:

"Well, I congratulate you. I hope you'll be very happy."

His tone lacked warmth and hope, and he sat heavily down on the couch.

"You don't seem a bit pleased about it really. I never knew such people as you and the mater. You keep urging me to acquire a knowledge of women, and when I set about taking the proper steps to do it, you turn as glum as mutes." Edward spoke with considerable indignation.

"Glum? I'm not glum. I'm merry and bright. Ha! ha!" said Mr. William Lloyd, laughing a hollow laugh.

With an injured air, Edward drew a mashie from his bag of golf clubs in the corner and a piece of wash leather from the pouch of the bag, and began to polish it.

Mr. William Lloyd sniffed; then he sniffed again.

"So she's been round to see you already this morning. That's very nice of her," he said, in an ingratiating tone.

"No, she hasn't," replied Edward carelessly.

Mr. William Lloyd looked puzzled; then he took a cushion from behind him and sniffed at it.

The industrious Edward raised his head from his task and saw what his friend was doing. He stopped rubbing his mashie, his jaw dropped, and a guilty blush mantled his cheeks.

To blush under the eagle eye of Mr. William Lloyd was fatal. On the instant he was all alertness.

"This is jolly scent," he observed, in silken tones.

"Scent? Wh-wh-what scent?" stammered Edward, and his tone was guiltier than his blush.

"Who's been paying you a visit?" added Mr. William Lloyd, and his tones were even silkier.

"Who's been paying me a visit?" repeated Edward, sparring heavily for time.

"Yes, dear friend—a visit," persisted Mr. William Lloyd, and a grim and callous smile wreathed his lips.

"Oh, that—it's hair wash," said Edward with a sudden brazenness.

"Hair wash? I don't think!" He rose and added in a tone of the coldest virtue: "But Heaven forbid that I should pry! The secrets of my friends are sacred from my curiosity."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Edward.

He rose, dropped the mashie back into the bag, and walked to the hearth-rug with a very thoughtful air. He was used to unburdening his soul to his friend, and he was feeling that he was in a situation rather beyond his handling, that he really needed the advice of an expert in affairs of the heart.

"Oh, well, I think I'd better tell you about it, for it looks as if I may want your advice and help," he said. "Only you'll keep it to yourself? There's no harm in it, of course, but still——"

"Oh, I'll keep it to myself. You know I always do."

Mr. William Lloyd spoke calmly, though never in his life had his curiosity been so keenly on edge. That Edward—the reserved, ascetic Edward—should have a secret in which a woman was concerned, passed all expectation.

"I did have a visitor," said Edward. "And it is her scent. When I came back, after seeing the mater upstairs to her flat, I found her here."

"Last night?"

"Yes."

"I always said that there was too much gilding about the halls of these Mansions," said Mr. William Lloyd sadly.

"Oh, it was nothing of that kind; you can get that out of your head once for

all," said Edward in a tone that carried conviction.

"I see. Well, I suppose you'd left the door of your flat open?" said Mr. William Lloyd, accepting the statement.

"No. She came through the window."

"But this is Shakespearian! Juliet and Romeo!" cried Mr. William Lloyd, with enthusiasm.

"No; nothing of the kind. She'd come up by the fire escape."

"Oh, I see—you sent her down again at once—like a good boy," said Mr. William Lloyd, with less enthusiasm.

"Well, no, I didn't."

"Good for you! But, I say—wait a minute—surely this didn't happen after you got engaged?" There was a touch of anxiety in Mr. William Lloyd's tone.

"Yes, it did," Edward answered, somewhat uncomfortably.

"Oh, Edward! Edward! And this is the man who has again and again reproached me for not forever sticking to the same girl. But there—it's always the way with women; it never rains but what it pours. For months your heart is empty; and then in about a week you have five or six of them nestling in it—"

"Oh, dry up! You're getting it all wrong," interrupted Edward sharply. "This was the girl who wanted the interview—for the *Gadfly* and the American paper—and that was her way of getting it—and really it was an extraordinary coincidence."

"I don't see any coincidence. It must have been carefully worked out beforehand," said Mr. William Lloyd, in a tone which showed that he had lost a good deal of his interest in the fair visitant.

"No, that wasn't the coincidence; the coincidence was that she was the girl I lugged out of the Thames yesterday."

Mr. William Lloyd sprang up from the couch with the resiliency of the best gutta-percha.

"That girl!" he cried, as he seized Edward's hand and wrung it warmly. "Oh, what a thing it is to have a friend like you, Edward! You'll introduce me to her! To-day! To-morrow at the

latest! And how providential it is that you're engaged to be married! Why, I might have found myself hopelessly up against a rising novelist as a rival! And now you're comfortably and happily out of the way!"

Edward, as he withdrew his hand abruptly from the warm clasp of his friend, looked neither comfortable nor happy. Indeed, it was no exaggeration to say that he glowered on the transported Mr. William Lloyd.

"You'll meet her this afternoon at tea," he growled.

"Shall I?" cried Mr. William Lloyd, in a ravished tone.

"Yes," growled Edward.

Mr. William Lloyd executed a short, graceful dance, which he had acquired during his study of art on the Continent. It was, perhaps, a little out of keeping with his usual sedate bearing, but it was pretty and expressive. It did not, however, smooth the gloomy frown from Edward's brow.

Mr. William Lloyd stopped before the little mirror in the overmantel, straightened his tie, and regarded his mobile face with quiet approval.

"It is fortunate that you're engaged to be married," he repeated. "Who knows but what, if you had been brought into contact with her, even your insensible heart might have been touched."

He turned and gazed at Edward with grateful eyes. But as they rested on the frowning countenance of his friend, his expression slowly changed, first to a look of slight bewilderment, then to one of the liveliest understanding.

He whistled a short, extremely expressive whistle, which he had acquired during his study of art on the Continent, and said:

"Oh—I see—I see! I'm afraid I've been going it, rather. But I didn't understand."

"Understand what?" asked Edward shortly; and for no reason in the world that he could think of, he began to blush.

"That it has been touched already," said Mr. William Lloyd firmly.

"Don't be an infernal ass!" Edward

spoke with considerable heat. "How could it be? I'd just got engaged—"

"Over the telephone," interjected Mr. William Lloyd coldly.

"Oh, nonsense!"

"Well, what was it you said you might want my advice and help about?"

"Oh, well—as a matter of fact—I did have a longish talk with the—er—with Miss Anning," said Edward, in a halting fashion. "And I'm bound to say that I found her uncommonly interesting."

"That was an advance—a distinct advance for you; and interest is akin to love," said Mr. William Lloyd in non-committal tones.

"Don't talk rot!" growled Edward. "And also I found her really instructive—"

"Not *instructive*; there is no such thing as an *instructive* woman nowadays," Mr. William Lloyd put in quickly. "*Destructive—constructive—obstructive*, if you like; but *instructive* never."

"But that's just what she was," Edward insisted stubbornly. "I was really beginning to learn something about women."

"You were?"

"Yes; and I'm beginning to see that I ought to have started seriously to learn about them earlier," said Edward earnestly.

"Look here—you did not tell her that you were engaged to Miss Lipscombe?" asked Mr. William Lloyd quickly.

"Yes."

"At the beginning or the end of the interview?"

"Oh, quite at the beginning."

"Did she say anything about it?"

"Oh, yes; she said a good deal about it. She seemed to think that Evangeline would not stimulate me to work my best. She seemed to take rather a dislike to her. She seemed to attach such a lot of importance to her accepting me over the telephone," said Edward.

"She did, did she? I say, old man, you seem to have got pretty intimate in the time."

"Well—I suppose we did—rather. But the awkward thing—I mean—er—

the thing that might be awkward is that she talked about rescuing me."

"Rescuing you?"

"Yes; from the engagement."

"I say! You *must* have made an impression!" cried Mr. William Lloyd.

"Oh, it wasn't for my sake; it was for my work," Edward explained quickly. "She's very much interested in my work."

Mr. William Lloyd looked at him earnestly. "Oh, yes; your work—your work, of course," he said.

"Oh, it was. I don't really think she was humbugging me."

"No woman would dream of humbugging you," said Mr. William Lloyd quickly. "Did you say that she was coming to tea this afternoon?"

"Yes. I thought it would interest my mother to meet her." And once more, for no reason in the world, Edward found himself blushing.

"Of course—of course," Mr. William Lloyd assented readily. "And is Miss Lipscombe coming to tea this afternoon by any chance?"

"Of course she is."

"Ah! And I suppose you told her all about Miss Anning's visit when you went to see her this morning?" said Mr. William Lloyd; and his eyes grew very round and innocent.

"I didn't go to see her this morning; and I shouldn't think of telling her about Miss Anning's visit," said Edward quickly. "What does she know about newspaper work? She wouldn't understand at all."

"You're losing your guilelessness. You *are* beginning to learn about women," said Mr. William Lloyd, in an approving tone. He paused and added thoughtfully: "With anything like luck, we ought to have the tea party of a lifetime."

CHAPTER XV.

Ann awoke in a fine exhilaration, which for a while was unalloyed. She was somewhat careful not to examine closely its source. She did not ascribe it at all to her interview with Edward Hargraves the night before; she pre-

ferred to take it as a matter of course, the natural result of the bright summer morning.

But her exhilaration did not maintain its fine height. Presently a qualm of misgiving troubled her content. Suppose—suppose that in the cold—or, to be exact, warm—light of day Edward Hargraves, considering her action of the night before, found that it was beyond the limits of journalism—that it was forward—unmaidenly?

It was some time before she reassured herself, coming to the conviction that he was of a fineness really to understand the keenness of her fellow craftsman's interest in his work, and consequently in him as the creator of that work. No; he would not so misconceive her. If he did—well, he was not the man she took him for; it would not matter what he thought about her. She had no use for a man who lacked the finer appreciation.

She regained her untroubled content.

It was not till the middle of breakfast that she gave any thought to the troublesome matter of his engagement to Evangeline. But once having begun to consider it, she gave it most of her attention till she settled down to her work. But ponder the entanglement as she might, she could devise no feasible plan of rescuing him from it; and she grew impatient indeed with herself for her failure. The only thing that grew clearer and clearer was that Edward himself would never stir a step to free himself, that Evangeline was not of a disposition lightly to loose her hold on the prey she had probably been hunting for years, and that therefore her method of tearing them apart would have to be heroic indeed.

Soon after breakfast she settled down to work. The copy of her interview had been returned to her from the office of the *New York Courier*, and she set about altering it, or rather rewriting it, for the *Gadfly*. She was rather more than half an hour doing it, for she had to remove a good deal of the brightness of tone with which she had dealt with the matter; it would have ruffled the sedate sensibilities of the English

reader. In the English version there was no mention whatever of the flannel nightshirt.

When she had finished it, she went to her window and gazed out on the backs of the houses in Dover Street. The sunniness of the morning was very tempting, and she came to the conclusion that she would enjoy the stroll to the office of the *Gadfly*. There was no doubt that Mr. Fosbrook would be glad to have the interview as soon as possible; and it would show greater zeal if she hurried to him with it than if she sent it to him by a district messenger. She could do her reviewing later in the day, or in the evening, at an hour when it would be less pleasant to be out of doors.

She put on a pretty walking frock and hat, went to the door of the flat, and paused. After a little hesitation, she went back to the window of her sitting room and looked up at the fire escape to Edward's window, just one brief glance. She felt that so much interest was his due. Unfortunately he could not profit by her kind thoughtfulness, for at the moment he was cruelly harrying a department of the Army and Navy Stores in his endeavor to find a certain perfume.

She was a little disappointed, though she had by no means been expecting Edward to be spending his morning on the lookout for her. None the less, she enjoyed her stroll along Piccadilly to the office of the *Gadfly*. She found Mr. Fosbrook in, looking through some contributions, with a blue pencil in his hand. He was very much pleased to receive the interview, and congratulated Ann warmly on her having succeeded where older, more expert journalists had failed. Unlike many editors, he made it his practice to give the successful efforts of his staff their fullest meed of praise; he found that appreciation increased their energy. Ann had come prepared to take advantage of the satisfaction that the receipt of the interview should induce in him, and suggested two articles to him. He commissioned both of them almost with enthusiasm, and she returned home in tri-

umph, and at once began to write one of them.

Now and again she paused in her writing, and a deeper frown furrowed her brow. The question of the rescue of Edward from his Evangeline was troubling her. It was a pressing question; she felt that she must break off the engagement before it had time to solidify, so to speak. If it became a firmly established fact—she could by no means regard an engagement arranged over the telephone as a firmly established fact—she would not only find Evangeline harder to shake loose, but Edward, too, would feel yet more bound to maintain it.

She was not by any means at a loss for ideas for breaking off the engagement, but they all had the same weakness; they were not feasible—at any rate in London in the twentieth century. It was at lunch that the fairly feasible plan occurred to her. At first she dismissed it after a short consideration; it was too heroic. But it kept returning to her mind, for, unlike the others, it was feasible, though its successful execution demanded considerable luck. At last it presented itself to her as the only chance, and she made up her mind to try it.

Yet even then she hesitated a while before she set about it. She knew that Edward was out, for all through her work and thought she had had her ears alert for a sound in the flat above. It was past half past three when, in an access of desperation, with set teeth and flushed face, she went to her wardrobe and came away from it with a small bundle. She went to her window, took a glance around, slipped out of it, and ran up the fire escape.

Edward had left his window wide open, so that she had only to slip through it. Once in his room, she examined it swiftly with the eye of an expert strategist, and then got to work. Under a chair in the left-hand corner, and well in the shadow, she set a pair of very small slippers. She believed that a man might be in the room for twelve hours and never notice them, but she was sure that no woman could be

in the room twelve minutes without their leaping at her eyes.

Then she turned her attention to the couch. She took up a cushion and put under it a pair of silk stockings. She was careful to plump the cushion out before she put it back on top of them. Under the cushion at the other end of it she put a lace blouse, a Paris model, very flimsy and dainty. She looked around the room and chose an easy-chair in the corner. Under the cushion on it she put the last garment, a lace nightgown as flimsy and dainty as the blouse. As she set the plumped-out cushion down on it, she said under her breath:

"There—if that won't break off an engagement, nothing will!"

She went to the window, stopped at it, and looked around. Surely she had got the couch smooth enough and the cushions neatly enough plumped out. Her fear was lest Mrs. Hargraves should come before Evangeline and insist on tidying the room against the coming of Edward's guests. That was the bad luck she feared that would ruin her plan.

Well, she had done all that in her lay to break the engagement; the rest was in the hands of Fortune. She slipped through the window and down the fire escape. Once more in her flat, she betook herself to her bedroom and began to make her toilet for the party.

She was saved from her work being undone by any further tidying of Edward's sitting room by the fact that after lunch the dean and Mrs. Hargraves paid their visit to the Academy. Edward went with them; but at twenty minutes to four he left them to buy cakes for tea. He was unusually profuse, even lavish in his purchases; and he excused himself to himself on the ground that it was an occasion, his engagement tea. He did not for a moment admit to himself that he would not have been nearly so careful in his choice of cakes and sweets if Evangeline only had been coming, and not Ann as well.

Owing to his delay over these purchases, he did not reach his rooms till

three minutes to four, and then he was far too busy—putting his kettle on the stove, setting out the tea things, and arranging the cakes and sweets—to have any time for tidying his flat and discovering Ann's preparations. As it was, he was so pressed for time that he welcomed warmly Mr. William Lloyd, who arrived at ten minutes past four, and set him to watching the kettle.

Mr. William Lloyd went gravely into the kitchen.

"I do it because you ask me," he said, in a depressed tone, "but it is merely sacrificing myself on the altar of friendship; a watched kettle *never* boils."

"Oh, yes, it does—if you give it time," said Edward impatiently.

"Favorite of Fortune!" said Mr. William Lloyd.

He whistled softly, gazing gloomily at the kettle.

"Sing, pretty creature—sing!" he murmured. Then he turned to Edward. "I say, have you seen any more of your fire-escape beauty?"

"No of course I haven't. I've been out. And if I hadn't, I shouldn't have seen her. She's not at all that kind of girl," said Edward sharply.

"Isn't she, now?" said Mr. William Lloyd in a somewhat provoking tone. "It's surprising how quickly you men of genius divine a person's character."

Edward said nothing, but changed the position of the *marrons glacés*.

"By the way—you told me how she came—how did she go? I suppose you let her out of your front door?" said Mr. William Lloyd, in the tone of one making polite conversation.

"Well, I didn't. She went the way she came—through the window and down the fire escape."

"How far down the fire escape?" asked Mr. William Lloyd, still carelessly.

"To the next floor," said Edward, carefully moving the *marrons glacés* to another place.

"Favorite of Fortune!" said Mr. William Lloyd, with a deep sigh.

Edward stopped arranging the sweets and, with a heightened color, glared

down the short passage and through the kitchen door at his mournful friend.

"I wish you wouldn't be an ass," he said, in a tone of decision. "I've told you I'm engaged to Miss Lipscombe. What on earth can it matter to me whether Miss Anning is my neighbor, or whether she lives at the other end of London?"

"Nothing, dear boy—nothing at all," agreed Mr. William Lloyd, with alacrity. "But why did you look down the fire escape to see how far she went?"

"Oh, hang——"

A rat-tat-tat on the door of the flat cut Edward's heated protest short. In a milder, eager tone, he said:

"There she is!"

"Yes. But which of them?" said Mr. William Lloyd.

Edward looked at himself in the glass in the overmantel, set straight the tie that matched his socks, went on light feet to the door of his flat, and threw it open hospitably wide.

It was Evangeline.

CHAPTER XVI.

At the sight of Evangeline, Edward's face did not fall. It grew, perhaps, a trifle blank, but most certainly it did not fall.

"How—how—are you?" he said, with something of an effort.

"How are you, Edward?" returned Evangeline, in a slight confusion.

They looked at each other awkwardly, not meeting each other's eyes, but raising their gaze to the height of each other's chins.

Then he said, with sufficient heartiness: "Come on in."

Evangeline walked down the passage into the sitting room; but when she found only Mr. William Lloyd waiting to welcome her, she stopped short and said uncomfortably:

"Oh, I made sure Mrs. Hargraves and the dean would be already here."

Her words and attitude of somewhat excessive propriety jarred on Edward as they certainly would not have jarred on him on the afternoon of the day be-

fore. The words "prunes and prisms" suddenly came into his mind.

"Oh, it's all right," he said quickly. "Billy's here to chaperon us."

Mr. William Lloyd came forward, and, shaking hands with her, said in a very good imitation of truthful accents:

"I've heard the news, Miss Lipscombe, and I congratulate you both. Edward's a—a—very lucky fellow—a—a—regular favorite of Fortune, don't you know?"

"Thank you," said Evangeline calmly, and in the tone of one receiving her mere due.

Her calmness displeased Mr. William Lloyd; he would have preferred her to show a little confusion, to flush faintly. Evangeline had never appealed to him; he saw now, quite suddenly, that if Edward married her, their old friendship was at an end. She would never allow Edward to be the friend of a man of whom she had a righteous disapproval. He saw, too, with the same sudden clearness, that there were many other things she would not allow Edward, most of them things good for him. It seemed to him that his friend's fate was written in her small, thin-lipped mouth and pointed chin. He felt sorry for him.

"Sit on the couch, won't you?" invited Edward.

"No; you know I always prefer a straight-backed chair," said Evangeline; and she sat down in one, and folded her hands in her lap.

She looked, to the fast-jaundicing eye of Mr. William Lloyd, the very model of small, self-satisfied smugness; and his sorrow for his friend increased.

There came an awkward pause. Edward did not know what to say to set the conversation going; Evangeline was leaving the starting of it to him; Mr. William Lloyd was too busy sorrowing over the fate of his unfortunate friend to start it. The silence was growing oppressive.

Mr. William Lloyd awoke suddenly to its oppression. It was clear that he was the third who is no company.

"I'll run upstairs and tell Mrs. Har-

graves you're here, Miss Lipscombe," he said briskly, and went briskly out of the room.

"Oh, no——" Evangeline began.

But Mr. William Lloyd shut the door firmly on her protest, and was gone.

The silence persisted. Edward found himself practically paralyzed by a horrid discomfort. He looked at Evangeline hard, but helplessly; he found something repellent in her calm, smug self-satisfaction. She was plainly waiting for him to begin a conversation appropriate to the situation, and he could find no beginning. He cursed Mr. William Lloyd, well under his breath, for deserting him.

Then he had a sudden inspiration; he said:

"Won't you take off your——"

Then he realized that she was wearing no cloak or jacket over her summer frock, and was silent in confusion.

"I haven't anything to take off," she said. "I rather wish I had brought a wrap or something. It's quite chilly for the time of year, don't you think?"

"It is. I'll shut the window," said Edward, almost dashing to it in his relief at finding the conversation at last started.

"No, no! Don't shut it! I'd much rather feel cold than sit in a room with the window shut," cried Evangeline.

Edward left the window and came to the hearthrug. The silence fell again.

Evangeline broke it with a sniff; then she sniffed again.

A sudden dread assailed Edward.

"Edward, do you use scent?" she asked, in a tone of incredulous disapproval.

"No—yes—of course—sometimes—when it's very good," he stammered.

"I don't use it, and I don't like it. You'd better know it at once," she said, in a tone that sounded almost vinegarish to him.

"Yes—yes—of course—I'll make a note of it," he promised.

There came another silence, even more awkward. He looked at Evangeline and wondered how it was that, when they had been mere friends, he

had always been able to talk to her with utter ease, while now that they were united in this closer and dearer relation, he found himself so miserably tongue-tied.

With some impatience, he bade himself be a man and a lover. He bade himself embrace his betrothed as both custom and nature demanded. But it was no use; he only stood still on the hearthrug. What was worse, as he gazed at her, his betrothed seemed to him to assume a more and more formidable, almost sinister, air.

The silence was now terrible.

Evangeline broke it. With a conscious air, she said:

"I suppose you're feeling very shy now."

Then she simpered with a dreadful archness. It was her way of being what she believed to be perfectly sweet.

With a nervous shudder, Edward said faintly:

"Oh—ah—yes—now you come to speak of it—I believe I am. It's—it's—the first occasion on which we've been together since—since we got engaged."

"Yes; and fancy your proposing over the telephone! That was up to date!"

Edward was conscious of a considerable shock; then he realized that different people have indeed different ways of looking at things.

"Oh—yes—I'm—I'm—very glad you think so," he said, with a complete lack of anything like gladness in his tone.

The silence was falling again, when, once more with the dreadful archness, Evangeline said:

"Don't you think you ought to kiss me?"

"Oh—er—yes! Of course! I was just going to," said Edward manfully, and manfully he strode from the hearthrug to her side.

She drew up her veil slowly, but complacently.

He felt that he was indeed learning about women, and that it was a very painful business.

She bent her head to one side, exposing her cheek. Edward set his teeth, and manfully impressed on it the peck that had revealed a world of love to

the hero of "Hannah's Honeymoon." It did not reveal a world of love to him. Indeed, it left him cold; he did not burn to repeat the passionate operation.

"I only let you do it because it's usual when one is engaged," she said firmly, drawing down her veil as a safety curtain.

It seemed to Edward a cheering way of putting it.

"Of course—of course," he said gloomily.

"Yes," she went on. "I'm so glad you've been quite honest with me—about your feelings, I mean. I'm so glad that you're like me—that you don't believe in love—the silly sort of thing one reads about in books."

"Oh—ah—quite so," agreed Edward, without enthusiasm.

"Your book is wrong in places about women; but you're perfectly right, I'm convinced, in the love scenes."

Edward was once more conscious of shock. He said in a startled tone: "But everybody says that that's just where the book's weak!"

"They're wrong—quite wrong," Evangeline declared firmly, with an air of superiority. "I like the calm, sensible way you make Hannah behave. And I think"—she simpered sweetly—"I may have helped you without your knowing it."

"Perhaps you did," said Edward, and he was conscious of a sudden access of dislike of the heroine he had created with such pains.

"And I do think it was so clever of you to write about a honeymoon as you did; and that part about a kiss where they got engaged, I did like that: 'His lips touched her cheek for one brief moment,' it began." With her forefinger, she touched her veil above the place where he had administered the passionate peck. "It is so true," she added.

"Do you think so?" cried Edward, flabbergasted.

"Yes; it shows me so clearly that you have genius."

Edward ought to have felt flattered; he felt that he ought to feel flattered.

Genius is a large word. But, as a matter of fact, he had felt far more flattered when, the night before, Ann had expressed the opinion that he had the makings of an understander of women in him.

"Oh, genius?" he said doubtfully.

"Yes, genius," repeated Evangeline firmly. "A genius can always write brilliantly about any subject, no matter how inexperienced he happens to be. I think it was quite wonderful the way you got it so right."

"But *was* it right?" questioned Edward.

"Of course it was right," said Evangeline, with the final conviction.

"But how on earth do *you* know?"

"Oh, well—ah—yes; I mean it *sounded* right," said Evangeline, in some confusion. "And—and—how did *you* know?"

"Oh, I made it all up," said Edward cheerfully.

"I'm glad of that."

"Why?"

"Because if I thought you'd written 'Hannah's Honeymoon' from your own actual experience, I might have been jealous."

"Oh, well, I don't think you have any cause for jealousy—about 'Hannah's Honeymoon,'" he said, and wondered why he had added the qualifying phrase.

There was a pause; then Evangeline turned suddenly primer than ever.

"It has always seemed to me that a really good woman should be as jealous of a man's past as of his present," she said, in a severe, didactic tone.

"Oh, does it?" said Edward, in a non-committal voice, for it seemed to him a proposition that needed consideration.

"Yes, it does. A good wife should always be jealous, Edward."

The sentiment offended deeply Edward's sense of the fitness of things.

"That sounds a trifle mid-Victorian," he said coldly.

"It's nothing of the kind. I have always been brought up to believe that real love is never free from jealousy." She spoke with considerable heat.

"And I was just beginning to fancy

it was free from everything but love," said Edward dreamily.

"I hope you're not becoming sentimental, Edward," said Evangeline, in the vinegarish tone he had observed before. "What I liked so much about 'Hannah's Honeymoon' was that Hannah——"

Edward suddenly awoke.

"Oh, hang Hannah!" he said.

CHAPTER XVII.

Evangeline felt that the very air of the room was thrilling with horror. Edward had blasphemed his heroine, Hannah, of "Hannah's Honeymoon," one of the most truly English and satisfactory heroines she had found in recent novels!

"I'm afraid London isn't doing you any good, Edward," she said, in scared, reproachful tones. "You are changed."

Edward, somewhat surprised himself by his sudden firmness in the matter of his heroine, said, with an air of one suddenly revealed to himself:

"I do believe I am changing."

"Yes, you must be. But what a good thing it is that an author can work anywhere! You'll be soon your old self, if we settle down in Milchester."

"Milchester?" repeated Edward blankly. "You don't suppose any one could write in Milchester?"

"It's the ideal place!" protested Evangeline, raising her voice. "So peaceful—so serene."

"It's an excellent place, if you're writing about mangel-wurzel, but I'm not," said Edward, with some shortness.

Evangeline raised her voice yet higher. "But I'm sure it would be ever so much better for you than London—so much less unsettling!"

Their further progress toward the complete lovers' quarrel was cut short by the sound of voices in the hall; and Mrs. Hargraves entered, followed by the dean and Mr. William Lloyd. She crossed the room to Evangeline, kissed her, and said:

"My dear child, I'm sorry I wasn't here when you came. We are so pleased

with Edward's news. It has made us so happy."

"I'm so glad," said Evangeline.

The dean took her hand and shook it firmly, saying with his most pastoral air and in a tone of sonorous solemnity:

"My dear—God bless you! I am overjoyed to think that Edward has such a suitable helpmeet—a—er—Ruth to any—er—Boaz."

"Thank you so much," said Evangeline, firmly looking her sweetest.

"It's a great thing for Edward—a great thing," said Mr. William Lloyd, emulating the dean's solemnity. "He will now begin to understand women, and write about them accurately."

Evangeline looked at Mr. William Lloyd with a very cold, spiteful eye.

"I think he does, Mr. Lloyd," she said, in freezing accents.

"Ah, you wait and see, Miss Lipscombe. In a few months—a very few months—he'll be writing very differently about them," declared Mr. William Lloyd, unabashed and unfrozen.

"I've no desire for him to write differently," Evangeline spoke icily.

"Of course you haven't," returned Mr. William Lloyd warmly; and he added cryptically: "It all helps."

"And you'll teach him so many things only a nice girl can teach him," said Mrs. Hargraves. She caught the cold eye of Mr. William Lloyd. It hushed her, and she looked a little guilty.

"I do trust your dear father will be delighted—er—Evangeline," said the dean.

"I'm sure he'll be quite pleased," said Evangeline. "Aunt was when I told her last night."

"Was she?" said Mrs. Hargraves, somewhat dryly. "But about that tea, Edward. Is your kettle boiling anywhere? I'm dying for my tea. The Academy does make one so thirsty."

"I'll make it at once," said Edward; and he went to his kitchen.

The dean went on to talk of the pleasure the news would afford their friends at Milchester. And then the unexpected happened. Ann had been certain that Mrs. Hargraves or Evangeline would espy the slippers; but Mr.

William Lloyd demonstrated his claim to more than masculine acumen by espying them first.

His eyes rested carelessly on them at first, then interest dawned in them. Then he looked earnestly at the comfortable, middle-aged boots of Mrs. Hargraves, and the interest in his eyes deepened. He went across the room to them briskly, picked them up, and examined them carefully.

His eyes suddenly shone with all the triumphant ardor of the discoverer; he came forward, holding them out, and said in a somewhat excited tone:

"Has any one been leaving their slippers about?"

Evangeline gazed at them and Mrs. Hargraves gazed at them; then they looked at each other, then back at the slippers. Their eyes were wide open.

"They're a girl's," said Evangeline.

"Yes, there's no doubt about that," said Mr. William Lloyd, with a cheerfulness that seemed somewhat misplaced.

Evangeline gave him a look of the coldest dislike, took the slippers from him, passed one to Mrs. Hargraves, and examined the other.

"They're a girl's. How extraordinary!" exclaimed Mrs. Hargraves, in a tone of unaffected amazement.

Edward entered, bearing the teapot.

"These slippers, Ned?" said Mr. William Lloyd, in a kindly voice, waving his hand toward them.

Edward gazed at the slippers in some perplexity, watering a small portion of his carpet from the teapot as he did so.

"I suppose they're yours, mother," he said.

"They don't look to me exactly your size, my dear," observed the dean, who had a good view of the slippers, since he was sitting beside his wife on the couch.

"No, they certainly aren't my slippers," said Mrs. Hargraves. "I don't wear threes," she added sadly.

"But whose slippers can they be, if they're not yours?" asked the innocent Edward, in a tone that assured her at

any rate that he really knew nothing about them.

"My dear boy, how on earth can I tell you?" she answered, laughing.

She looked suspiciously at Mr. William Lloyd, but he wore an air of equal innocence; and, like most women, Mrs. Hargraves did know innocence when she saw it.

"It's a very small foot, too," said Evangeline darkly.

"Very small, indeed—very small, indeed," said the dean, taking the slipper from Mrs. Hargraves. "It's almost Chinese."

"No, American," said Evangeline gloomily.

"Now, that's really very interesting. You can recognize an American foot, can you?" asked the dean.

"No, the shoe," said Evangeline, even more gloomily.

There was a silence. They all gazed at the fatal slippers with more or less interest and perplexity; and Edward watered another part of his carpet from the teapot he still held in his hand.

Then a knocking on the door of the flat broke the tension. Edward set down the teapot on the tray and went to the door. He opened it, to find Ann, radiant and ravishing in her prettiest frock, standing at his threshold. She smiled at him; and he smiled at her, a most gratifying smile, and held out his hand. She put hers into it, and, as he took it, the party in the sitting room heard a delightful voice say:

"This is Mr. Hargraves' flat, isn't it?"

"Yes, it's my flat," said Edward.

"You're the author of 'Hannah's Honeymoon'?"

"Yes."

"Well, my name's Anning. I thought I would call and see you personally about that interview you've refused so often over the telephone."

"Oh—ah—that interview——"

"Bring Miss Anning in at once, Edward," cried Mrs. Hargraves, from the sitting room. "We can't have you keeping all the delights of London to yourself. We never see an interviewer at

Milchester, though there is a legend that the bishop saw one once."

"Come in—come in!" said Edward, in his most hospitable tone, and Ann walked down the passage into the sitting room.

Edward introduced her to his mother, and Mrs. Hargraves said:

"How do you do, Miss Anning? You don't know how interested we country people are in all these London mysteries."

"I'm so pleased to meet the mother of so interesting an author," said Ann.

"Let me introduce you—Miss Lipscombe—my husband—Mr. Lloyd."

The dean came forward hurriedly, setting down the slipper on the couch.

"Charmed, my dear young lady—charmed to make your acquaintance," he said, with an impressed air. "My son is indeed honored." And he shook hands with her warmly.

"Miss Lipscombe is my future daughter-in-law, Miss Anning," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"But how interesting!" said Ann; and, turning to Evangeline, she added: "Aren't you very proud of him?"

"Of course," said Evangeline stiffly.

She resented Ann's frock, and hat, and parasol, and gloves, and shoes, and the way she wore them; she resented her complexion, and hair, and eyes, and everything that was hers. Till this intruder came, she had been manifestly the most attractive and important person in the gathering; and now, of a sudden, she was feeling that her nose was being put out of joint.

"Won't you sit down, Miss Anning? I'm sure you'd like some tea before you do your interviewing. It must be exhausting work," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"Thank you, I should," said Ann, and she sat down.

She sat down on the end of the couch from which the dean had just risen, and consequently she sat down on the slipper.

She sprang up, exclaiming: "Whatever am I sitting on? A slipper!"

"A most mysterious slipper," said

Mrs. Hargraves. "Just before you came in——"

"Won't you pour out the tea, mother?" Edward interrupted hastily.

"No; as a parson's wife, I have to pour out more than enough tea when I'm at home. This is my holiday. Besides, it is Evangeline's duty to pour it out here."

Evangeline rose, bridling a little, and went to the tea table.

"About that slipper?" asked Ann.

Edward made a dash at the cakes and almost thrust two dishes of them at her.

"Oh, just before you came in, Mr. Lloyd discovered a pair of slippers under that chair in the corner——"

"Some cake, mother?" interposed Edward sternly.

Mrs. Hargraves took a cake, and went on in the most unconcerned fashion:

"And nobody knows whose slippers they are. Edward doesn't and Mr. Lloyd doesn't, and I'm sure I don't; and I don't see how my husband can unless he brought them back from the Cabaret Theater Club last night."

"Oh, but this is most interesting! What a headline it would make in the American interview: 'The Mysterious Slipper'!" cried Ann.

"You wouldn't be so unkind, Miss Anning," said Edward.

"Unkind? Why, it would sell the book like anything."

"Now, how could a slipper sell a book?" asked the dean, with a puzzled air.

"Oh, you sell books by making people read about them," Ann explained. "If they read that a mysterious slipper is found in an author's room, they naturally discuss the mystery and its solution with their friends; and so more and more people come to hear of him."

"I think it's rather vulgar," said Evangeline, with cold superiority.

"Vulgar? Why, there's nothing vulgar in a slipper. Besides, it's an unaccountable American slipper in an English author's rooms. So far from it's being vulgar, it seems to me quite out of the common. I'm sure that most

English authors could account for every slipper in their possession."

"I think, Miss Anning, it might be as well if you suppressed this circumstance," said Mrs. Hargraves pleasantly. "After all, Miss Lipscombe's friends do live at Milchester; and, as you doubtless know, Milchester is a cathedral town."

"Of course I won't mention it, if you'd rather not," said Ann readily. "In journalism one is so apt to forget the cathedral towns."

"I have feared for a long time that that was happening," said the dean, with pained solemnity.

Ann turned and arranged the cushion behind her more comfortably. In doing so, she managed to uncover the blouse for two or three seconds.

They were enough for the eagle eye of Mr. William Lloyd. He said suavely:

"Pardon me, Miss Anning. I think you are crushing something under that cushion."

Ann moved forward, and he picked up the cushion.

"Why, whatever's this?" cried Mrs. Hargraves.

Ann picked up the blouse and held it out.

"It's a blouse—a very pretty blouse," she said.

"Good heavens!" cried Mrs. Hargraves; and she took the blouse from Ann.

"It's a woman's blouse!" said Evangeline, in a tone of the coldest sternness.

"It's a French blouse," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"A French blouse and American slippers—the *entente cordiale* and 'hands across the sea' all at one go. This is catholicity!" exclaimed Mr. William Lloyd. "But you must look charming in that blouse, Ned."

"What does it mean, Edward?" demanded Evangeline, in a terrible, almost wifely, voice.

"It's really most extraordinary!" murmured the dean.

"Most!" said Evangeline.

"My dear Edward, you haven't been

buying Evangeline's trousseau, by any chance?" Mrs. Hargraves asked, laughing.

"Of course I haven't!" said the bewildered Edward, with some heat.

"I was never so tempted in my life!" cried Ann, and she laughed, too.

"Tempted?" asked Mrs. Hargraves.

"Tempted? What do you mean?" snapped Evangeline.

"Just think of the copy I can't use! It's worth at least two hundred and fifty dollars." Ann spoke plaintively.

"I can't see any joke in this at all, Miss Anning!" cried Evangeline furiously. "You appear to forget that I'm engaged to Mr. Hargraves!"

"I wish I could forget it, with all this copy simply throwing itself at me," said Ann sadly.

Mrs. Hargraves turned and raised the cushion behind her, disclosing the stockings.

"Another find!" cried Mr. William Lloyd.

Mrs. Hargraves took up the stockings, replaced the cushion, and sank down against it, laughing uncontrollably.

"My dear Edward, an enemy has done this thing!" she murmured.

"But what is it?" said the dean, taking the stockings from her. "Stockings! What on earth——"

"They *are* stockings!" cried Evangeline, in the tone of an accusing angel.

"Do say that they're Bulgarian! Keep up the catholicity," pleaded Mr. William Lloyd.

"They're French—French, and silk," announced Ann, bending down to look at them.

Evangeline turned fiercely on Mr. William Lloyd. "If this is a practical joke of yours, Mr. Lloyd, let me tell you that it's in the worst possible taste!" she cried.

"This is the joke of a genius; and I'm not a genius in jokes—only in black and white," said Mr. William Lloyd.

"On your honor, Billy?" asked Mrs. Hargraves.

"Yes; really—on my honor," said Mr. William Lloyd, in the plain accents of

the truth. "I should have been proud to have brought it off. But I've never seen the things in my life before." He laughed again.

"It is really very funny," said Ann. "But I can't enjoy it; my professional instinct won't let me. You people don't realize what it means to an expert to see a story that would run to at least a couple of columns, go begging like this."

"Personally, I think that this is beyond a joke, madam," said the dean stiffly. "That this feminine—I think that one would be right in calling it this *intimate* feminine attire has been discovered in my son's room is—Edward, I must really, in common decency——"

"Don't ask him to explain, Mr. Hargraves!" broke in Evangeline furiously. "It's outrageous—absolutely outrageous!"

"Oh, come!" protested the bewildered Edward.

"I think, if I were engaged to a man, I should feel rather like that myself, Miss Lipscombe," said Ann, in a tone of sympathy.

"Have you no idea where these things came from, Edward?" asked Mrs. Hargraves, perceiving that the matter was really getting beyond a joke.

"No reasonable explanation of their appearance in this suspicious, hidden way in your rooms?" added the dean. He moved irritably across the room to the easy-chair, just as Ann was about to suggest that there might be more of them.

"None at all!" said Edward.

"Well, my dear boy, you needn't look so tragic about it. It's just some foolish joke," said Mrs. Hargraves, in a soothing tone.

"Joke!" sniffed Evangeline.

Edward looked at her grimly, and perceived that the tip of her nose was red—very red. It was the effect of emotion.

It was left for the dean to take the lid completely off. As Ann was expecting, the cushion on the easy-chair caught his eye; he stooped down and raised it, uncovering the nightgown. He grabbed at it, caught it by the col-

lar, and, as he raised it in the air, it unrolled itself.

"Edward, you know what *that* is!" Evangeline gasped.

The dean spoke in a voice of hushed horror:

"It appears to me to be a—to be a——"

"Isn't it a pretty one?" exclaimed Mrs. Hargraves, with genuine enthusiasm.

"Isn't it?" agreed Ann, with equal enthusiasm.

"—a nightgown!" the dean concluded.

Evangeline came forward with a splendid, tragedy air, held out her hand, and said in what she was sure was the voice of a Christian martyr:

"Well, I must be saying good-by, Mrs. Hargraves."

"My dear Evangeline, don't be silly! There's no reason in the world why you should go," Mrs. Hargraves protested, somewhat impatiently.

"I'm very sorry; but my staying is quite out of the question—quite!" snapped Evangeline.

"But, hang it all! It isn't my—Oh, hang!" cried Edward, and he strode fiercely across the room to the door and flung it open for her.

"Stay—stay!" the dean interposed, in sonorous, arresting tones. "Surely you have some theory to account for these—er—garments being under your cushions."

"What's your theory, Miss Anning?" asked Mr. William Lloyd. "As a journalist, you're always being brought into contact with mysteries."

"Oh, I'm a stranger. I can have no theory. But it appears to me to be rather a tragedy for poor Mr. Hargraves," said Ann, in a commiserating tone.

"Oh, it's just some joke—some feeble joke!" growled Edward.

"I can stand no more," said Evangeline, in a terrible voice. "I think the whole thing is perfectly abominable! Will you see me home, Mr. Hargraves?"

"Certainly—certainly, my dear. I quite understand your feelings—your

very natural feelings," said the dean, coming to her.

"Really, Evangeline——" began Edward.

She cut him short, saying:

"Don't speak to me! Don't say a word!"

"I wouldn't, Edward," said Mrs. Hargraves, with emphasis.

Edward shrugged his shoulders.

"Good-by, Mrs. Hargraves," said Evangeline. "Good-by, Miss Anning. I hope you will at least keep my name out of your American paper."

"I'll do my best. But it's a temptation," said Ann, very solemnly.

"Thank you," said Evangeline.

"Need we really be so serious about a thing like this?" Mrs. Hargraves broke out again impatiently.

"My dear, much as I regret to differ from you," said the dean, "I must side with Evangeline until some explanation——"

"Well, I can only trust to your kindness, Miss Anning, to prevent this absurd business becoming public property," said Mrs. Hargraves, cutting him short.

"Of course, I won't let it become public property," promised Ann, with cheerful readiness. "If it did, it might hamper the sale of Mr. Hargraves' books for years. It isn't as if they were light comedy."

"Do you really believe this of me, sir?" asked Edward, turning to his father.

The dean glared at him, and opened his mouth to speak; but before the words came from his lips, Mrs. Hargraves broke in:

"Of course he does—a good man always believes the worst." The dean transferred the glare to her. "Yes, that was what I said, Samuel: a good man always believes the worst," she repeated firmly. "And the better the man, the worse the worst is."

"Well, upon my word!" said the dean somewhat faintly. Then, as if the situation were getting too much for him, he turned to Evangeline. "Come, my dear," he said.

Evangeline sailed through the open

door, giving Edward the requisite glance of cold scorn as she passed him. The dean followed her, giving an almost perfect illustration of the splendid dignity of the good man in a state of acutely righteous indignation.

Edward closed the door on them, with an emphasis truly unnecessary.

"Poor Edward!" said his mother; but she smiled with perfect content.

"Dashed from the height of bliss," mourned Mr. William Lloyd. "And such bliss!"

"Oh, cut it out!" growled Edward.

"To think that he should have deceived us all these years!" went on Mr. William Lloyd yet more sadly; "wearing the white flower of a blameless life with all that ostentation! I don't like to associate the name of a wife of a dignitary of the church with the term, but we have been mugs, Mrs. Hargraves—mugs."

"Oh, drop it, Billy!" said Edward.

"I have an idea—a splendid idea!" Mrs. Hargraves cried, with an air of inspiration. "Let's have tea!"

"I'm dying for it," said Ann. "And it has just had nice time to draw."

"Excellent idea!" agreed Mr. William Lloyd. "After emotion, tea."

Mrs. Hargraves forthwith set about pouring it out; and they talked—that is to say, Mr. William Lloyd chiefly talked to them—about Henley, and the theater, and the life of the journalist. By the time they had finished tea, every one but Edward was quite soothed and peaceful. He still wore an air of gloom, and he kept looking at Ann with a faint hostility. But he could never catch her eye, and it was no comfort to his injured feelings to perceive that she was quite unperturbed, while there rested on her face a demureness that he had not perceived on it before.

Mrs. Hargraves did not miss the faint hostility in his gaze when his eyes rested on Ann, and she wondered. It was to her simple mind proof positive that there were excellent grounds for a suspicion that had been excited in it by the fact that the owner of the incriminating garments used the same uncommon, subtle scent as Ann. She was

naturally intrigued by the matter; but she was quite certain that the explanation of the mystery was innocent.

When they had finished their tea and the three younger people were halfway through their cigarettes, she rose, saying:

"Well, I'm sure that Miss Anning's time is valuable, and we've seen how hopeless it is to try to interview any one when other people are present; so Mr. Lloyd and I will go up to my flat, and he will doubtless amuse me while he smokes his cigarette."

Mr. William Lloyd rose with polite alacrity, but Ann said quickly:

"Oh, but do you think that Mr. Hargraves is quite in the condition to be interviewed at present?"

She did not want to be alone with Edward for at least an hour or two.

"Oh, quite—quite!" said Mrs. Hargraves serenely. "It will divert his mind from his troubles. And I'll take these incriminating garments up to my flat with me. They're of no use to a bachelor."

She did not miss Ann's slight, protesting start.

Ann rose, and, as they shook hands, Mrs. Hargraves said:

"I hope if you've any spare time, you'll come and see me before we go back to Milchester. I'm in a flat—number nineteen—on the floor above this."

"I should love to!" cried Ann, with real warmth.

"And please don't tell Edward that his novel is wonderful, because it isn't," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"I won't," Ann promised. "But may I tell you how much I admire his mother?"

"Thank you," said Mrs. Hargraves. "Not one mother in a thousand would have behaved as you did."

"Miss Anning, I've been a parson's wife since—oh, since the flood. But I'm still a woman who understands. Now, don't forget I really want you to come to see me. Ring up at breakfast time and fix any hour you like. The number is one, nine, one, three Regent."

They shook hands again, Mr. William Lloyd shook hands with a deeply impressed air, and they departed.

As they came into her sitting room, Mrs. Hargraves said carelessly:

"How long has Edward known Miss Anning?"

Mr. William Lloyd hesitated. Then he shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, and, with a resigned air, said:

"Since the day before yesterday. He pulled her out of the river at Henley."

"And when did she see him to thank him?" asked Mrs. Hargraves, in the same careless tone.

But that was asking too much; friendship balked at the true answer, and Mr. Lloyd said, in the most natural tone:

"Well, I take it that she dropped in on him this morning."

"No, that would make a hopeless mystery of it," said Mrs. Hargraves. "But it's all very interesting, and I expect I shall learn all about it some day. Did you notice that James Pride landscape in the Academy?"

"You do know when to leave a man alone!" said Mr. William Lloyd, in a tone of warm approval.

CHAPTER XVIII.

When the door closed behind Mr. William Lloyd, Edward once more found himself at a loss for words. It surprised him the more in that he was convinced of the justice of his indignation. Ann showed no inclination to help him to the expression of it. She lay back on the couch and smoked her cigarette with an air of complete absorption in the pleasure of it.

At last he said bitterly: "What a thing to do!"

"What thing?" asked Ann innocently.

"Those clothes."

"Why, they were very nice clothes," said Ann.

Edward growled.

"I was afraid you'd be angry," she said sadly.

"Angry? I should think so!" he

snapped. "You've shocked Evangeline—irreparably."

"Yes, she did seem shocked." Ann spoke calmly.

"I should jolly well think so!" said Edward.

"Well, don't you think it was better that she should be shocked now than later?" asked Ann, with unruffled calm.

"Why should she be shocked later?"

"Oh, later you'd have given her a whole succession of shocks—much worse, really, than the one she got to-day. You don't know yourself—at least you don't realize what you would have grown into with Miss Lipscombe," said Ann, in a quite dispassionate tone.

"But it's a shame to have shocked her like that—a—nice, simple, affectionate girl!"

"Now, that merely means that your pride is hurt," said Ann, still in a dispassionate tone.

"What do you mean?" Edward asked, turning and frowning at her.

"You didn't mind about Evangeline last night."

"Oh, last night—I think I was a bit mad last night."

"And a very good thing for you, too!" said Ann warmly. "But when the day comes, the unromantic day, we become sane, and uncomfortable, and timid, don't we?"

Edward gazed at her, and his frown was now more thoughtful than hostile. Then he said petulantly:

"It's all very well spinning theories, but at the moment I'm thinking about facts. Those—those things of yours are very difficult to explain away."

"That's why I chose them," said Ann cheerfully.

"But what am I to do? What on earth am I to do?" he cried.

"Why do anything at all? Your moral character is unassailable, really." There was a touch of mockery in her tone.

"Oh, leave my morals out of it!"

"Certainly. But why try to explain them away?"

"But that won't help Evangeline. She'll never believe——"

"Didn't I tell you she had a fine ca-

capacity for being ignorantly shocked?" she interrupted.

"Well, you can't deny that she had reason."

"But I do. Your mother only laughed," protested Ann.

"That's true," he said, a trifle taken aback.

"And I thought that your mother was the one woman in the world of whom you have a really high opinion," went on Ann, driving it home.

"Oh, it's no good arguing!" he exclaimed, in a fresh impatience. "You've got me into no end of a hole."

"Or got you out of one. I think you're very ungrateful—very," said Ann, indignant in her turn.

"No, I'm not ungrateful," said Edward, in a far from grateful tone.

"And I've lost a blouse, a pair of stockings, the only slippers I ever loved, and a—"

"Yes, yes!" Edward put in quickly.

"—nightgown—a duck of a nightgown," Ann finished obstinately. "I will say 'nightgown.' Why shouldn't I? Everybody wears one—even you—and flannelette, at that."

"I don't!" said Edward quickly, and he blushed. "I bought some silk sleeping suits this morning."

"Good!" approved Ann. "But I wish you'd let your mother choose them for you. I expect you bought pink ones, and they'll never suit you."

"They're *not* pink! You seem to think I'm a perfect baby!" cried Edward, again indignant.

"No, not quite a baby; about—about—seven years old. Oh, what a lot of splendid copy I'm losing!"

"I believe you did it all for the sake of that copy!" cried Edward, his vanity deeply hurt by the suggestion of his youth.

"Oh, no, you don't!" she returned, with assurance. "You're only angry because you're so young."

Edward ground his teeth.

"I wish to goodness I'd never set eyes on you!" he said, with heat and conviction. "It's perfectly monstrous—a girl coming—coming through one's window and upsetting everything like this

—and making such a confounded fool of me!"

"Well, why don't you tell them that the things belong to me?" asked Ann quickly.

"You know quite well I can't."

"Why ever not? There's no harm in it, is there?" she cried, in the most innocent tone.

"Oh, don't be silly! As if they'd ever believe that!" snapped Edward.

"Your mother would believe it, all right. Suppose I tell them myself?"

"Now, look here! You leave things alone!" said Edward, in a tone of genuine ferocity. "They're as bad as they can be, and they don't want making worse."

Ann smiled a most charming smile.

"Very well," she said sadly. "But, all the same, it's hard that I should have to lose those—garments, I think you called them—especially that—"

"That's enough!" snapped Edward.

"It'll spoil the set," added Ann mournfully.

"Set! Well, you'll have to wear odd ones. It's your own fault!" snapped Edward.

"Odd ones?" gasped Ann. "Odd ones? Oh, I think I'll be going."

She walked toward the fire escape, with her head in the air.

"No, you don't!" Edward interposed himself between her and the window.

"The door, please. And—and—"

"Don't say you never want to see me again," said Ann quickly.

"That's precisely what I was going to say!"

Ann looked at him with pleading, melting eyes.

"Precisely," repeated Edward, rejecting their appeal.

Ann walked to the door with a very dignified air. Edward did not go to it to open it for her. He went to the window and looked out of it. Ann was not displeased by this lack of courtesy. It seemed to her to show that he enjoyed a sense of intimacy with her.

She smiled broadly at his sulky back—she wanted to laugh, but she dared not go as far as that; then she said sweetly:

"By the way, would you like a guinea bottle of that scent of mine?"

"No!" snapped Edward, without turning around.

"Very well," said Ann sharply; then, in a melancholy tone, she added: "Farewell, heroic preserver."

Edward growled in his throat.

She laughed a mischievous, mocking laugh, opened the door, and, without going through it, banged it. Then swiftly and noiselessly she crossed the room and stood immediately behind him.

Edward heaved a sigh, thrust his hands into his pockets, turned slowly, and slowly crossed the room to the hearthrug. Ann turned with him, followed closely behind him, and stopped when he stopped. He took a pipe from the mantelpiece, his pouch from his pocket, and sighed again even more heavily.

Ann gave him a gentle poke in the back.

Edward sprang round with almost a yelp.

"Do you know——" began Ann.

"No! And I don't want to!" howled Edward.

"But you've got to," said Ann, in a perfectly composed tone. "To-night—this very night—you'll want to see me more than you ever wanted anything in your life before."

"I'll be hanged if I shall!" cried Edward, in the final exasperation.

"Oh, yes, you will," said Ann calmly. "You'll sit in that armchair and you'll begin to think; and you'll begin to dislike yourself very much for not having more spirit. And then you'll try to think of Evangeline romantically—the lost Evangeline—and you won't be able to, because you can't. And you'll get more and more miserable until you're the very limpest imitation of your magnificent moral self; and if your mother sees you, she'll laugh at you; and you'll know that it serves you right. And one of these days you'll tell me that it served you right—so there!"

"I shan't! I shall never tell you anything again!" cried Edward, with the most heated conviction.

"Oh, yes, you will," declared Ann, with a far calmer, far more irritating conviction. "I shall insist on it."

"What do you mean? You'll never get the chance!"

"Of course I shall get the chance!" said Ann scornfully.

She walked to the door with a very dignified air. Edward this time gazed at her. When she came to it, she paused and looked at it.

"I'm going," she said.

With every show of reluctance, Edward came forward and opened it for her. With no less reluctance, he walked down the hall after her and opened the door of the flat.

On the threshold she paused and said:

"Heroic preserver—au revoir!"

Edward slammed the door.

CHAPTER XIX.

Ann walked down to her flat, laughing quietly, but with uncommon glee. The anger of Edward filled her with mischievous delight.

As she took off her hat and changed into a working frock the expression of delight passed from her face, which grew more and more thoughtful. Even on second thoughts, she was not at all displeased by the anger of Edward. It was quite natural; the immediate result of his having been thrust helplessly into a hopelessly false position. But that soreness would soon wear off. It would, indeed, give place to quite another soreness—a soreness with Evangeline for having been so ready to condemn him. That would be a far bitterer, more lasting, soreness. What was more, it would presently bring him to the stage at which he would be uncommonly grateful to Ann for having delivered him from Evangeline.

She sat down to do an hour's work with her mind quite at ease. She felt no compunction whatever in the matter of Evangeline. She felt that that cynosure of Milchester had behaved badly, indeed; she had truly given Ann every reason for delivering Edward. She worked steadily, with just a few pauses

to think about Edward, till dinner time. Then she strolled to a little French restaurant in Soho, where the cooking was quite good, and dined leisurely with a young artist and his wife.

After slamming his door on his deliverer, Edward lighted his favorite pipe with the utmost fury. Then he dropped heavily into an easy-chair and set himself to review the situation. He did not find his mind working with its usual clarity. Indeed, it seemed inclined to whirl. He could not keep it on the central fact of the injured Evangeline; it would turn aside to consider the piquant, mocking face of Ann.

And that was merely a foolish waste of time, since he was resolved never to see Ann again.

Before he had got his mind really to work on the situation, a knock came at the door of his flat. To his surprise, his heart gave a little jump at the thought that it might be Ann come back. Then he scowled horribly and went slowly to the door. He opened it savagely—to find Mr. William Lloyd standing on the threshold.

"Lady gone?" he asked blandly.

"Yes," growled Edward.

"Your mother said she had—when we heard you shut your door," said Mr. William Lloyd, still blandly. "A wonderful woman, your mother."

He walked down the passage into the sitting room, and Edward followed him in silence.

"Your mother also said that you had evidently cut off your nose in order to spite your face, by quarreling with that most perfect of peaches," said Mr. William Lloyd, yet more blandly.

"Impudent, interfering little beast!" growled Edward.

"I should hardly have called your mother *little*—"

"I'm speaking of Miss Anning—as you very well know," snapped Edward.

"Oh, well—after all—she didn't do any particular harm," said Mr. William Lloyd, in an indulgent tone.

"No particular harm!" cried Edward.

"What about Miss Lipscombe? She was horribly shocked and hurt."

"Only her vanity," said Mr. William

Lloyd calmly. "To my mind, she showed a somewhat painful readiness to believe evil of you."

"What else could she believe—with all those infernal clothes turning up all over the place?"

"Oh, she might have believed many things, as, for example, your mother did. *She* tumbled to it at once that it was either a joke or an enemy."

"Jokes that hurt people, as Miss Lipscombe was hurt, are absolutely unpardonable. Besides, I had got everything nicely fixed up, and this little devil comes along and upsets the whole apple cart!" cried Edward.

"Oh, I don't think you need take much to heart either the lady or the apple cart," said Mr. William Lloyd sagely. "I don't believe that the apple cart is upset. In fact, I'm betting that Miss Lipscombe forgives you—looking like a martyr while she does it, of course—on the theory that a reformed rake makes the best husband. She'll enjoy reforming you"—Edward winced—"thoroughly. I should say that it was her *métier*. Later on, she'll tell her friends all about the interesting and efficacious process."

"Oh, if you've set out to be cynical —" Edward shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm not being cynical—there's no need to be. I'm just doling out the cold facts to you. You're both uncommonly healthy people, and at your golden wedding you'll still be hearing about that pretty lace nightgown."

"Go to—Jericho!" said Edward, with genuine feeling.

"Really, there's only one chance for you, and that is to make one dash for a special license and marry Miss Anning before you're forgiven by your Evangeline. I think Miss Anning might take you—out of pity. At least, she looks as if she had a kind heart."

"Marry—marry Miss Anning?" repeated Edward, in a somewhat breathless voice.

"It's your only chance."

"I wouldn't marry Miss Anning if she were the only woman in England!"

"Good!" cried Mr. William Lloyd, with a sudden, joyous animation. "Then

"I'll jolly well marry her myself; or, at least, I'll have a jolly good try to!"

Edward was surprised by a sudden, distinct, and painful twinge of jealousy.

"You will, will you?" he growled faintly.

"You bet I will!" said Mr. William Lloyd, with enthusiasm. "She's the very thing the doctor ordered me!" He paused; then went on: "But, of course, this marriage would mean the end of our friendship. It's quite clear that you cannot stand my future wife——"

"You seem very sure that she'll have you," said Edward.

"Of course I'm sure. Have I a faint heart? No! But our friendship would come to an end anyhow because *your* future wife can't stand me——"

"If you think I'm the kind of man to let a woman dictate to me, you're quite wrong," said Edward, with some heat.

"Bless your simple heart! Your Evangeline—I mean, Miss Lipscombe—won't dictate, she'll nag," said Mr. William Lloyd, with disquieting assurance.

"Really, you *are* talking rot! There isn't one chance in twenty that Evangeline will forgive me."

"I tell you it's a certainty. The only question is whether you're such a duffer as to let yourself be forgiven," said Mr. William Lloyd.

Edward jumped up out of his arm-chair.

"Look here!" he cried violently. "I've jolly well had enough of this! Hang these women! I was perfectly comfortable yesterday before any one interfered and they came flocking in. I won't have anything to do with any of them. I can get on quite well without them."

"They'll never really let you alone now," said Mr. William Lloyd, in a cheering way. "The only thing to do is to turn homeopath and take a minute dose of them—get married, I mean. Then your wife will shoo the others away. If, that is, you get the right wife to do it."

"I'm hanged if I'll get married!" cried Edward fiercely.

"You'll certainly get married before

you're hanged—if that's any consolation."

"Oh, confound you! Let me have a little peace! Talk about something else!"

"I have only spoken for your good," said Mr. William Lloyd severely. "But I will speak no more. I am going. I am dining with Morton, round the corner—at Hatchett's; and I'll look in after dinner to see whether you have been such a duffer as to let yourself be forgiven. So long—Fortune's favorite!"

He departed, with the proud air of one who has done his duty and done it firmly. Edward knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and decided that a brisk walk round the park would probably do his whirling mind a great deal of good. There had been some talk about his dining with his father and mother; but it had not been definitely arranged, and he had no desire to dine with his father. He was feeling sore with him. Of course, feminine attire is feminine attire; but his father had known him twenty-eight years, and ought not to have been in such a hurry to condemn him. If it came to that, Evangeline had known him for eighteen years. There was something in what Billy had said about her being ready to believe evil of him. She certainly had been ready—uncommonly ready.

He took his hat and stick and ran up the stairs to his mother's flat. He did not want to discuss the affair at the moment; he wanted to get his mind quite clear first—to see the situation from a distance, as it were. Therefore, he told her that he would not dine with them that night.

"You needn't worry about your father, really," she said, in an indulgent tone. "That readiness to believe evil is only the natural effect of Milchester. He doesn't really mean anything by it. Some virtuous people have to think evil, you know, or they can't feel really virtuous. It's exactly the same with Evangeline. They don't understand."

"Oh, I know," said Edward. "But it makes one a bit sore."

"And then perhaps—perhaps—about

Evangeline—— Oh, well, no; I won't say it."

"You were going to say that I might be well out of it," said Edward quickly.

"It's the kind of thing you've got to settle for yourself. I'm inclined to think that I was very silly to interfere in the first place," she said.

"Oh, it's all right, mummy. You meant it for the best," and he kissed her. "But I'll be off. I don't want to run across the pater just now. Mind you have a good dinner. Make him take you to the Café Royal. Good-by for the present."

He came away from her, feeling somewhat soothed, walked briskly down Piccadilly into the park, and started to walk around it at the fastest pace at which he could keep fairly cool.

As he went, he pondered the unuttered opinion of his mother about Evangeline. Was he, indeed, well out of it? It was the opinion of both Billy and his mother that he was. He could rely very well on their judgment, for both of them not only were devoted to his interests, but also knew him thoroughly. After all, Evangeline had not taken it very well; even if you put aside the fact of her readiness to believe evil of him. It was quite right that she should be shocked and angered by the apparent revelation of his perfidy; but surely, if she had cared for him, she ought to have been grieved, too. And she had not been in the slightest degree grieved—only angry. Billy was quite right—it had been only her vanity that had been hurt.

Did he want her to forgive him? Well, there was nothing to forgive, for one thing. Of course, he did not want people to believe that he had behaved badly to her. Not that he cared a rap about the people of Milchester. But one doesn't like to have the reputation of having behaved badly when one has done nothing of the kind. But being forgiven by Evangeline would surely mean the renewal of their engagement. Did he really want that? His face grew somewhat glum at the thought of it. There was no doubt about it—he was feeling distinctly relieved at having re-

covered his freedom. He did not feel at all inclined to part with it again. Not even to Evangeline. Undoubtedly not to Evangeline. No!

Any forgiving that took place had better be by letter. He did not want to see her again yet a while. The memory of her angry face was not a pleasant one. After all, if there were *no* forgiving, he would bear up. Milchester be hanged!

These considerations brought him quite halfway around the park. Then quite suddenly his thought shifted to Ann, and he frowned severely.

Of course, her interference had been unwarrantable—absolutely unwarrantable; there could be no doubt of that. And for it to take such a form! An absolutely impossible form! Still it had certainly been efficacious. Possibly, considering Evangeline in the new light that her reception of the discovery of those garments had thrown on her character, a milder device would have had no effect. After all, however strongly he might disapprove of Ann and her indelicate—they certainly were indelicate—methods, he did owe his freedom to her. She had meant well, of course. He believed that she had honestly desired to save his work from an influence she had considered pernicious to it. Well, he was grateful to her—to a degree. Her interference had to a degree justified itself.

Feeling thus calmer about her, he began, almost insensibly, to consider her afresh. She was indeed a pretty creature; there were certainly grounds for Billy's enthusiastic, if slangy, description of her as "the most perfect of peaches." After all, to call that type of girl—that pretty, piquant, kissable type of girl—a "peach" was really not at all a bad image.

And he was forgetting—she was not only a pretty, piquant, and kissable girl, she was also an uncommonly intelligent one; she was "A. A.," of the *Gadfly*, and he had read her work with genuine interest for months. Really, if you came to think of it, it was rather a compliment that she should have taken all that trouble to get an interview with

him and then gone on to take the further trouble to rescue him from Evangeline. Of course, he had pulled her out of the Thames. But he was sure that she was too intelligent to overestimate that service. If he hadn't pulled her out of the Thames, fourteen other people would. All he had really done was to save her from getting her hair wet by acting quickly.

Suddenly he remembered, with uncommon vividness, how it had felt to hold her in his arm. It gave him quite a little thrill. Then her face, sparkling and animated as she had talked to him the night before, came into his mind very clear and distinct. By Jove! How well she had talked! He had certainly begun to learn about women from her, even in the short time they had been together. What a pity she had spoiled things by that silly trick with those garments!

Well, he might be pretty sure that they would meet again—at some literary party or other. And, of course, there was Billy! Billy would be seeing her. He had certainly been in earnest when he had said that he would have a try to get her to marry him. It was a troubling thought. She was certainly not the girl for Billy. Or, to be exact, Billy was not the man for her. Not to put too fine a point on it, he was not good enough for her. Billy was a very good chap—a delightful fellow, but he was shallow—undeniably shallow. Now, a girl like that—"A. A.," of the *Gadfly*—deserved a man with more to him—more brains—more character. Yes, it would never do; it would be a pity—a great pity!

Edward suddenly awoke, and saw where he was going.

"Oh, what the devil!" he muttered.

In a sudden panic, he hailed a taxicab and bade the driver take him to the Savage Club.

CHAPTER XX.

Edward was unlucky in finding none of his friends at the Savage Club, and he dined at the same table as a depressed and uncommunicative journal-

ist. Had he been more fortunate in his companion, or companions, at dinner, he might have lingered on at the club. As it was, he decided, somewhat gloomily, to return home and work. He was no believer in night work; but he had gotten into difficulties in a love scene he was writing, and he found that it had, for no reason that he could see, grown much clearer in his mind, and would now write itself, so to speak, with considerable ease.

He walked back to Albemarle Street, and presently was working with a gratifying speed. He found that the scene had indeed grown clearer; and, what was more, it had grown fuller. He had so much clearer an understanding of the workings of his hero's mind and heart. But the odd thing was that his heroine, of whom he had had a somewhat vague vision, had grown suddenly very like Ann; indeed, he kept seeing her as Ann.

He paused once or twice to consider this curious psychological phenomenon, and from it he passed naturally to the consideration of Ann herself. Of a sudden his conscience pricked him severely. Looking back on their last interview after the calming lapse of hours, it occurred to him that he had not behaved at all well. In fact, now that he came to consider it, it grew clear to him that he had behaved with uncommon boorishness.

It was by no means a pleasant discovery for a virtuous young man—a young man, indeed, who had been priding himself on his virtue—to make; but he saw now very plainly that he had treated a well-meaning helper—and in the light of her success he could not even reckon her a clumsy helper—very scurvily. And it was a woman, too—a slight and delicate girl—whom he had treated with that harsh unthankfulness. He was thoroughly ashamed of himself.

The next and most natural step was that he was filled with an abounding pity for Ann. How horribly he must have lacerated her feelings! And how well she had taken it! With what fortitude had she concealed her pain! With

what good temper had she endured his abominable behavior!

In an acute access of self-reproach he rose and began to pace the room.

He had been exercising himself thus for but a little while when the dean and Mrs. Hargraves returned from the Café Royal. Mrs. Hargraves told the lift boy, as a matter of course, to stop at Edward's floor. But the dean said:

"I think, my dear, I should like—er—a few words with Edward first. Of course, if it were not for Evangeline—much as I should regret those—er—feminine garments—I should not interfere, except, perhaps, to utter a word in season. But as it is, I think I have a right to an explanation, since Evangeline's father is a close friend of mine, and he is not in London."

"Oh, well—ask Edward for an explanation, by all means, if you want to. But you won't get one from him; and if he could give you the truth, you'd find that he had merely been the victim of a joke—as has been quite evident all along," said Mrs. Hargraves cheerfully.

"I—er—wish I could think so. But I fear that that idea is suggested by a mother's fond partiality. I have observed an important fact—a very important fact." The dean spoke with an important air.

"Very well, have it your own way. Edward won't quarrel with you." She paused; then she added: "I wonder whether the fact you observed is the same as I observed."

"I will tell you later—if Edward's explanation is not satisfactory," said the dean, with a darkling glance at her.

He left her at the door of their flat; then he went slowly down the stairs, considering what he should say to Edward. In the middle of the flight, he paused for a while to find the exact phrase. When he came down on to the landing, the lift had been down and come up again. It disgorged Mr. William Lloyd.

"Good evening—er—Billy," said the dean, in doubt whether to tell him that he was about to speak seriously to Edward.

"Good evening, sir," said Mr. Wil-

liam Lloyd. "I hope they gave you a good dinner."

"Excellent—excellent," said the dean, warming at the memory of it. He decided that on the whole it would be as well to have Billy with him during his interrogation of Edward; he might prove useful. "I'm just going to have a few words with Edward about that—er—unfortunate discovery of this afternoon," he said; "an explanation, in fact."

"Then I'll go upstairs and talk to Mrs. Hargraves till you've got it over," said Mr. William Lloyd hastily.

"No—no; I think it would be a good thing if you were with me. I intend to deal with the matter from the point of view of a man of the world," said the dean, somewhat pompously. "I do not propose to adopt the parental attitude."

Mr. William Lloyd hesitated for a moment; then it struck him that it was practically impossible for a young man truly interested in his fellow creatures to see too much of the dean in his favorite part of a man of the world.

Edward, interrupted in his self-reproach, opened the door to them, with a troubled air. The dean took it to be the effect of remorse; Mr. William Lloyd, with a deeper knowledge of his friend's character, asked himself what Edward was worrying about now. He greeted them in the manner of one whose thoughts were elsewhere, and followed them into his sitting room, frowning.

The dean made straight for the strategic hearthrug, turned to face his errant son, drew himself up with a majestic air, and said:

"The—er—time has come for—er—an explanation, Edward. There are only men present now—men—er—of the world."

"I have nothing to explain—I told you I hadn't," said Edward stiffly.

"Well, I should say, considering the number of—er—articles which made that—er—inopportune appearance this afternoon, that you had a good deal to explain," said the dean tartly.

"You don't suppose I knew that those

wretched garments were there? Do you think I should have left them there if I had?" Edward broke out with some heat.

"I've no doubt that you didn't know that they were in those exact places. But you can hardly expect me, as a man of the world, to believe that you didn't know that they, or, at any rate, some of them, were somewhere in the flat," said the dean.

"Well, I didn't know that a single one of them was anywhere in the flat," cried Edward, with more heat. "And, what's more, no single one of them had been anywhere else in the flat except the place where it was found."

The dean shook his head in sad incredulity.

"I'm sorry you're taking that tone, Edward," he said. "I have done my best to—er—put a kinder complexion on the—er—matter for the sake of Evangeline. And, with the overwhelming burden of evidence before our very eyes, my task was hard enough without this—er—recalcitrancy."

"None the less, sir, I repeat I have nothing to say by way of explanation," said Edward, more calmly, but very firmly. "If you and Evangeline choose to judge me by appearances, why, then you must."

"You really mean to tell me that you have no idea how those—er—intimate feminine garments got into your flat?" probed his persistent sire.

"I may have my ideas on the matter; but I'm certainly not going to divulge them."

"Well, I may be a dean, Edward, but in this case I'm quite ready to judge you as a man of the world; and, as a man of the world, I can see only one possible explanation," said the dean, in a more indulgent tone.

"The usual man of the world's explanation, I suppose!" Edward broke in scornfully.

"Exactly—I mean—certainly not!" cried the dean.

"Look here, sir, we're only getting confused. Hadn't you better leave the man of the world out of it, and judge

me as a dignitary of the English Church?" asked Edward bitterly.

"Very well, I will," returned the dean, heated in his turn.

"Oh, it's much better to stick to the man of the world in a matter like this. It keeps things smoother," the worldly Mr. William Lloyd put in quickly.

"I think it's always better for the cobbler to stick to his last," said Edward. "My father's a dean; let him talk like a dean."

"I will—I certainly will!" cried his father. "Now, sir—why—er—now, can't you offer some—some—explanation?"

He found himself somewhat flustered by the difficulty of discovering a favorable ground for attack.

"I've told you I can't, sir. I don't actually know, for one thing, how those garments got here."

"But you must be able to think of one. What's the good of being a novelist if you can have no imagination? And Evangeline is willing to accept any reasonable explanation."

"I haven't one to give her," said Edward stubbornly.

"But I think, if you could find an explanation, in time she might be persuaded to consider the possibility of renewing her engagement to you," said the dean, in an imploring tone.

Edward felt a sudden cold chill, and realized that, from the point of view of marriage, he had certainly done with Evangeline for good and all. He said quietly, but with unmistakable firmness:

"I certainly shan't ask her again."

"You—you don't mean that!" cried the dean, in real distress.

"But I do," said Edward, yet more firmly. "It was to please you that I proposed to her. I wasn't in love with her, and she certainly wasn't in love with me. Perhaps that is an excuse for her condemning me straight off without listening to a word I had to say. Nobody else would have dreamed of doing so. The matter didn't—no more did Billy, here."

"Oh, no, I never dreamed of condemning you," said Mr. William Lloyd.

with conviction. "I know too much about you."

"Of course you didn't. It was left to my father and the girl I was about to marry to do that," said Edward bitterly.

"Oh, come! You must remember the shock to the feelings of a delicate girl that the sudden, unconventional production of those—er—intimate garments would produce under the circumstances——"

"Goodness, why? If I knew nothing about them?" cried Edward.

"But do you mean to say that you don't even suspect some one of a silly practical joke in the worst of taste?"

"What I suspect is neither here nor there," said Edward tartly.

"But why not reveal the name of this vulgar miscreant and restore your moral character in the eyes of these unbelievers?" suggested Mr. William Lloyd mischievously.

"Oh, dry up!" snapped Edward, scowling at him.

"Certainly—certainly," Mr. William Lloyd agreed cheerfully. "Only I never like to watch a martyr at the stake."

"If it wasn't a practical joke, what possible motive could any person have for——" the dean began, and stopped short, sniffing.

He picked up a cushion from the couch.

"I believe I have discovered a clew," he said.

His face was brightening with the sleuthhound's joy.

"A clew?" asked Edward innocently.

"Yes," said the dean. "There is a distinct resemblance between the aroma exhaled by this cushion and that of those—er—intimate and mysterious garments. I noticed it particularly when I was helping your mother try to find a name on them."

"Oh, Lord! Haven't we had enough of those confounded garments? Don't you think it's time you let the matter drop?" cried Edward impatiently.

"Let it drop? Let it drop, with a clew like this?" the dean exclaimed, in excited protest.

"All that that would mean is that the

owner of the garments uses the same hair wash as I do," said Edward deceitfully.

"No, no! It's not the hair wash! It's that girl! That newspaper girl!" cried the dean, crescendo. "I noticed that scent when she shook hands with me this afternoon; and now this cushion! It's the cushion she was leaning against at tea time!"

"Still, you know, sir, you can't be certain." Mr. Lloyd plunged to the rescue.

"But I *am* certain! Absolutely certain!" cried the dean, turning on Edward. "And you can't deny it!"

"But I *do* deny it!" cried Edward brazenly.

"Then you prevaricate, sir! My nose tells me that you prevaricate!" The dean ended on a note of triumph.

"I deny that Miss Anning—— Dash it all! Why shouldn't Miss Anning use the same hair wash?"

The dean drew himself up to his full height, and, moving with his stateliest air toward the door, cushion in hand, said solemnly:

"I shall reserve my judgment, Edward. I may be wrong—I trust I am. My nose may have misled me—I trust it has. If I have wronged you and this young woman, I am deeply grieved. And if you have compromised any one, as, I fear, is only too probable, I trust you will act—er—as my son should."

"Marry her?" asked Edward grimly.

"Certainly not!" said the dean in an awful voice, as he went through the door.

CHAPTER XXI.

After the imposing departure of the dean, Edward and Mr. William Lloyd looked at each other earnestly. Mr. William Lloyd's face wore an air of the most polite and delicate sympathy. Edward laughed a short, irritated laugh.

"And what are you going to do now?" asked Mr. William Lloyd, in a tone of kindly inquiry.

"Do?" snapped Edward. "There's no need for me to do anything. Every-

body is doing everything for me. All I've got to do is to sit still and look pleasant."

"I dare say with a little more practice you'll be able to do it," said Mr. William Lloyd hopefully. "At the moment, you look like a winter thunderstorm."

"And who wouldn't?" growled Edward. "Here was I, getting along quite comfortably, when the pater and mater take me by the scruff of the neck and thrust me into the arms of Evangeline."

"Over the telephone—we must never forget that telephone," put in Mr. William Lloyd.

"No sooner do I get there——"

"Over the telephone," interjected Mr. William Lloyd.

"Than Miss Anning proceeds to drag me out of them, because they're bad for my work," Edward went on, without heeding him.

"Oh, ho!" cried Mr. William Lloyd. "So that was the *bon motif*, was it? I was afraid that it was for your *beaux yeux*."

"Not a bit of it," said Edward frankly. "You know, she's 'A. A.' of the *Gadfly*, and she has really made up her mind that I can do good work some day, if I only get the right environment."

"I see; the enthusiasm of the craftsman for good work. Well, it is good hearing. If it *had* been for the sake of your *beaux yeux*, I shouldn't have had a chance—no more would you, for that matter. But as it is, why, I can try my fortune hopefully."

Edward was annoyed by another twinge of jealousy. Indeed he could not help saying:

"I don't think you're quite the kind of man to suit a girl of that kind."

"Don't you—expert?" said Mr. William Lloyd playfully. Then he continued more seriously: "Look here! Say if you want to enter for these stakes yourself, say but the word, and the field is free before you."

"Me?" said Edward, somewhat ruefully. "I'm out of it, even if I did

wish to enter. Why, I told her that I never wanted to see her again."

"You told—you told—that charming and delightful creature that!" gasped Mr. William Lloyd.

"Oh, well, you see, I was in an awful rage at being interfered with," Edward explained.

"Um—well—you never can tell," said Mr. William Lloyd thoughtfully. "Perhaps you haven't put yourself so much out of the running as you think. The angry hero is beloved by the tender woman, as the *Principia Latina* used to say."

"Nonsense! I insulted her; I made a perfect ass of myself."

"Oh, as long as you were a *violent* ass," said Mr. William Lloyd.

There came a hurried knocking at the door of the flat.

"That may be her," said Mr. William Lloyd.

Edward got to the door of the flat with uncommon briskness. He opened the door quickly, and his face fell on finding that it was his mother.

She thrust a parcel into his hand and said:

"Here; you'd better return these things to the owner. Your father is looking for them—he is on the trail!"

She laughed and ran briskly up the stairs.

"Thanks awfully!" cried Edward after her.

He brought the parcel into his sitting room, smiling.

"What is it?" asked Mr. William Lloyd.

"The links in the chain," said Edward. "My father is at fault; he cannot find the garments to compare the scent. My mother has just restored them to me."

"Good!" said Mr. William Lloyd. "Your mother is a woman in ten thousand."

Edward set down the parcel on the table, and looked at it thoughtfully.

"I wonder whether I can use them in some way to get into touch with her again," he said wistfully. "I should like to apologize."

"I'm sure you would," said Mr. Wil-

liam Lloyd. "But don't you think you ought to leave it to her to make the first advance?"

"She never will. I was too boorish," said Edward gloomily.

"It isn't a question of being too boorish, but of being boorish enough," said Mr. William Lloyd sagely. "But I say, don't you think it would be rather a good idea to go round to the Piccadilly Hotel and have a drink? You know your father will be coming down in a few minutes to weld those missing links into that chain. It may be painful to you to balk him."

"Perhaps you're right," Edward agreed reluctantly; and he looked wistfully at the window.

"Oh, there isn't the slightest chance of her turning up to-night, after your brutal behavior," said Mr. William Lloyd. "She'll make no effort to get into touch with you for several days—unless she's doubtful about Miss Lipscombe's steadfastness in evil thinking."

"Well, I ought to be able to work these clothes somehow," said Edward, faintly hopeful.

He set the parcel on a chair in the corner and accompanied Mr. William Lloyd to the Piccadilly Hotel.

When Mrs. Hargraves came back into her flat, she found the dean, cushion still in hand, coming out of their bedroom with an air of dissatisfaction on his face.

"Those—er—garments—I can't find them anywhere," he said unhappily.

"Oh, I returned them to Edward. They were found on his property, and I thought he had better take charge of them," said Mrs. Hargraves, with an innocent air.

"Dear, dear! That's a pity!" said the dean. "I particularly wanted those garments—to confirm a theory I hold. What does this remind you of? The scent of it, I mean."

He thrust the cushion at her, and she sniffed it.

"It's the scent that Edward's rooms smell of. Didn't you say it was hair wash?"

"I did," said the dean, in a tone of deep meaning.

"Well, I suppose he's been lying with his head on it."

"I should be only too happy to think so," said the dean heavily.

"What on earth do you mean?" Mrs. Hargraves asked, with just the right amount of surprise in her tone.

"This scent was also on those garments," said the dean, in a terrible voice.

"Yes; I noticed that."

"But did you notice the further fact—the incriminating fact—that that young woman was also perfumed with it?" he asked, in a tone of mournful, but deeply gratified, triumph.

"Oh, yes; I noticed that—at once," said Mrs. Hargraves, with the same carelessness.

"And do you mean to say that you drew no inference from the fact?"

"Oh, yes; I gathered that she had given him some of that scent," said Mrs. Hargraves innocently.

"Ah, I'm afraid that in your innocence and your ignorance of the life of a young man in London you entirely underrated that fact," said the dean, with his best man-of-the-world air. "But what about those garments?"

"Oh, she hid them for a joke."

"A joke? I wish I could think so," said the dean heavily. "Didn't you notice how they pretended never to have met before?"

"Oh, that was quite natural in young people," said his wife calmly. "They may not have been regularly introduced."

"I wish I could think so—I wish I could think it was only that," replied the dean heavily.

"I wish you could," said his wife quietly.

He looked at her sharply; then he said:

"But as a man of the world, I am forced to take a different view of the matter—a very different view."

"Well, then it's wrong—quite wrong," said his wife.

The dean reflected for a moment.

"Well, I'm sure I should be very

glad to learn for certain that my suspicions were unfounded," he said at last, "for if I am wrong, there is no real reason for this breach between him and Evangeline Lipscombe."

"That's where you're quite wrong again—wonger than ever," protested Mrs. Hargraves. "After the way Evangeline behaved to-day, there is every reason for a breach between them. I may be wrong, but I think that Edward is thoroughly alive to this fact. Indeed, I don't think you could persuade him to renew the engagement."

"He did say that he wouldn't," said the dean gloomily.

"I'm glad to hear it. I should be very sorry, indeed, if it were renewed."

"And yesterday you were so pleased with it!" the dean almost groaned.

"Oh, no, I wasn't—not really. No one—no woman could be pleased with an engagement over the telephone. Besides, yesterday Evangeline had not given that display. No; she isn't nearly good enough for Edward, and I can't think how I ever persuaded myself that she was."

"But I should have thought that just now—at this crisis—exposed as he is to this temptation, you would have welcomed the influence—the steadying influence—of an engagement to a sweet and innocent young girl like Evangeline."

"Well, I don't. I can see now that, if he did marry Evangeline, I should live in a perpetual dread of his waking up afterward—in three or four years. If he must sow wild oats—and I don't for a moment believe that he must—he'd better get them sown and done with."

"Dear, dear! This is very distressing! This is to thrust him into the meshes of the net this Miss Anning is spreading before his unwary feet."

"Well, it isn't such a bad net," said Mrs. Hargraves thoughtfully.

"For goodness sake, do mind what you're thinking about!" cried the dean in a sudden panic. "You'll go encouraging him till there'll be a danger of his getting seriously entangled with her

—marrying her—or something dreadful—a girl of whom we know absolutely nothing—probably penniless!"

"You're wrong about my knowing nothing about her. I know a good deal, and what I know I like very much. And as for your saying that she's penniless—well, there was certainly nothing penurious about that night-gown."

"But this is dreadful—perfectly dreadful!" cried the horrified dean.

"Oh, no, it isn't," she said firmly. "As a matter of fact, I shouldn't wonder if Miss Anning were the one girl in the world to wake Edward up."

"Heaven save us!" cried the dean.

CHAPTER XXII.

Mrs. Hargraves laughed at her husband's genuine fervor, and he gazed at her in a dull perplexity.

"What do you propose to do?" he asked heavily.

"I don't propose to do anything," she said. "You can generally leave young hearts to do anything that is to be done themselves."

"Young hearts!" groaned the dean. "But we don't know anything about the girl's people."

"Well, we know that she had a nice home—at least I do. You can always tell that," she said thoughtfully.

"Oh, can you? What about those garments?" questioned the doubting dean.

"I keep telling you that the explanation of them is sure to be quite simple."

The dean shook his head. As a man of the world, he realized how hopeless it was to argue with an optimistic woman.

"All the same, I should like to hurry things up a little—to strike while the iron's hot," she said, knitting her brow.

The dean groaned again and said bitterly:

"You seem absolutely bent on dragging Edward into an engagement with this strange young woman. Last night you were all for Evangeline."

"Well, it's hardly a matter of an engagement. Things are a long way from

that. And it's quite different. My instinct assures me to-night that I am doing the right thing. Last night I acted against it."

"Oh, if you're going to talk about instinct!" The dean waved his hand in a gesture of hopelessness.

"I think I'll go down and talk to Edward," she said, after a little thought.

"I shouldn't. You'd better leave things alone. They're quite bad enough as it is." The dean made a final and, as he well knew, unavailing protest.

Mrs. Hargraves rose.

"Oh, I think I will," she said. "Edward is not an ordinary man, and in a matter like this he actually needs help. The only thing is I fancied I heard him go out."

"You couldn't—on the floor below—in a well-built building like this," objected the dean.

"Really, Samuel, you've lived a great many years without perceiving that mothers have extraordinarily good hearing," she said impatiently. "But if he is out; I can always get some of his clothes and mend them."

She crossed the room and took from the mantelpiece the spare latchkey of Edward's flat. The dean eyed her gloomily.

"I shan't be gone long," she said, as she went out of the room.

It was well that she had taken the latchkey, for Edward was now at the Piccadilly Hotel. After ringing twice, she opened the door with the latchkey and went in.

She went straight through the sitting room into his bedroom and began to search his drawers for linen to mend. She had no difficulty about finding garments that clamored for the needle, and presently she came back into the sitting room with half a dozen on her arm. She had her workbasket up in her own flat and was crossing the room on her way to it when a noise at the window stopped her dead in startled apprehension. The long-expected burglar was coming up the fire escape!

She turned sharply, to see the smiling face of Ann framed in the window.

"Good evening, Mrs. Hargraves," Ann said, still smiling.

Mrs. Hargraves laughed.

"Gracious, child! What a fright you gave me! I thought you were the burglar I've been looking for ever since I came here."

"I'm so sorry," said Ann penitently. "I ought to have called out that I was coming. But really I did not mean to come in. I only came for a peep."

"But where on earth have you come from?" cried Mrs. Hargraves.

"The flat below," said Ann. "You see, I had to have that interview, so I took it for a week."

"I see," said Mrs. Hargraves. "Well, I've told Edward again and again that that fire escape is dangerous. Why, it's throwing temptation in the burglar's way."

"It really is awfully easy," agreed Ann.

"But you say you weren't coming in. What on earth did you come up it for?" asked Mrs. Hargraves.

"Oh, well—I came for a peep. I wanted to see whether certain prophecies I made this afternoon were working out as I expected. The fact is, it isn't the first time I've come up that fire escape." Ann put on a somewhat droll air of exaggerated demureness.

"So I was beginning to gather," said Mrs. Hargraves, and she laughed again.

"No I climbed up it last night and came in."

"Last night?" echoed Mrs. Hargraves quickly, and she sank down on the couch.

"Yes; after you'd gone to bed."

"After I'd— What on earth did Edward say?" cried Mrs. Hargraves.

"He seemed surprised," said Ann demurely, and she walked across the room.

"Surprised? The poor, dear boy must have been simply paralyzed!"

"Oh, well; it was something like that. But I wasn't surprised at his consternation, you know." She sat quietly down on the couch beside Mrs. Hargraves.

"You weren't?"

"No; I'd read his book, you see."

"Then you wouldn't feel surprised," said Mrs. Hargraves, with understanding.

There was a pause; then Ann said:

"I wonder why he didn't consult you about it."

"How do you know he didn't?"

"He couldn't have made such a lot of mistakes if he had."

"He's very—very young," Mrs. Hargraves half apologized.

"I think he is just the youngest thing I've ever come across," said Ann softly.

"He is—he is indeed. So you can understand that he's been a very grave anxiety to me.

"He must have been," said Ann, in a tone of complete understanding and sympathy.

"And as a parson's wife, I was a good deal handicapped."

"Exactly," said Ann, in the same tone.

"And just when I was getting him safely married, there comes this absurd episode and knocks everything on the head," went on Mrs. Hargraves in a sorrowful tone that was quite hypocritical.

"Yes; and one does feel so sorry for poor Miss Lipscombe," said Ann with about the same degree of sincerity.

"Sorry for her? Why should one feel sorry for her?" Mrs. Hargraves asked, with considerable tartness. "What right had she to jump to conclusions? A girl brought up in a cathedral town, too!"

"That must be the limit in the way of upbringings," said Ann.

"Especially when I, Edward's mother, was simply convulsed with laughter."

"You do think that it was really quite harmless?" asked Ann eagerly.

"Yes; of course, it was—in the case of Edward," said Mrs. Hargraves firmly.

"Still it wasn't quite on the square," Ann ventured, a little nervously.

"But no practical joke ever is quite on the square; and certainly I wouldn't

have missed that one for worlds; and I'm not at all sure that I shall mind very much if Evangeline never recovers from the shock."

"Why?"

"Well, it was rather a revelation. And I feel that Edward is in some ways narrow enough as it is——"

"Not narrow, I think—undeveloped," Ann broke in quickly.

"Well, undeveloped—without his marrying a narrow little prude like that."

"I'm so glad you feel like that about it." Ann spoke warmly, and in her relief her eyes filled with tears.

"Why, my dear, whatever's the matter?" asked Mrs. Hargraves.

"You are. You're just the nicest mother and most understanding person I ever met!" cried Ann, with warm conviction. "And I was so afraid I'd been too drastic. But I felt, too, it had to be done."

"Then it was you who did it?"

"Of course, it was me; and you knew it all the time—I almost saw you guess it," said Ann.

"Well, you did make that scent rather emphatic."

"Yes. Do you know, I rather wanted you to know? I'd seen your face in that photograph, and I felt you'd understand."

"I see. But I'm not quite sure that I quite understand. It was, as you say, drastic."

"Oh, it worried me so—the engagement," Ann explained quickly and earnestly. "Her face in that photograph was bad enough; and when he told me that he was engaged to her, I felt that it would be the ruin of his talent. And then, when he went on to tell me that she had let him get engaged to her over the telephone, it about finished me. I felt as if I were standing by and witnessing a dreadful crime being committed—a murder, or something of that kind. And I just had to interfere."

"Yes, that telephone business was perfectly awful. It was a shock to me," confessed Mrs. Hargraves. Then she

added slowly: "But why are you so interested in Edward?"

"Oh, it was his book—it is so—so white-souled. And I wanted to see if the writer was like it," said Ann earnestly, blushing faintly.

"And what did you find?" Mrs. Hargraves asked softly.

"Oh, I found the soul of a child with the brain and understanding of a man."

"The soul of a child in the body of a man—yes," Mrs. Hargraves repeated.

"To tell the truth, I almost fell in love with my idea of the author of the book as I was reading it," Ann admitted, blushing.

"It would be far more to the point if you'd fall in love with the real man," said Mrs. Hargraves quickly.

Ann looked at her in some surprise. "But you don't know anything about me."

"Oh, yes, I do—a great deal. You know I do. The fact is, Edward is asleep. We were talking it over, he and I, yesterday, and he admitted it. We agreed that his only chance was to find the awakening princess."

"Oh, what a nice idea! And it's quite true, too," cried Ann.

"Yes; but we—it was my suggestion—we tried Evangeline."

"Oh, you must have been anxious!"

"Yes; that was why I made the suggestion. But couldn't you—couldn't you be the awakening princess?"

"Me?" said Ann, blushing. "Oh, it's such a serious thing falling in love—really."

"Well, you needn't go as far as that, need you?" asked Mrs. Hargraves anxiously.

"You'd rather I didn't?" Ann took her up quickly.

"No; oh, no," said Mrs. Hargraves as quickly. "But you could awaken him without going as far—unless you wanted to."

"It's so dangerous waking people. One might awake oneself," said Ann doubtfully.

"Well, what if you did?"

"It would be a change certainly." Ann shrugged her shoulders. "The

only thing is I'm afraid I should have to do something else dreadfully drastic."

"Well, there's no doubt that he is very, very sound asleep," said Mrs. Hargraves sadly.

"Let's think," said Ann, and she rose and walked across the room and back.

Mrs. Hargraves glanced around the room, and her eyes fell on the parcel she had brought down from her flat.

"Oh, there are your things—on that chair in the corner," she said.

Ann looked at the parcel carelessly, then more earnestly. Then she smiled wickedly and said:

"That gives me my idea!"

"What is it?" Mrs. Hargraves asked eagerly.

"No, I don't think I'd better tell you. You might be shocked."

"Oh, if it's as drastic as that, perhaps you'd better not," said Mrs. Hargraves, and she laughed.

"Well, you said he was very, very sound asleep," reminded Ann.

CHAPTER XXIII.

There came a somewhat uncertain knocking on the door of the flat. Ann sprang to her feet, ran to the chair in the corner, snatched up her parcel, and fled to the window.

There she turned and said:

"Can you get him out of the flat for a few minutes about eleven? I have to set the scene for the awakening."

"Yes; I'll do it somehow," Mrs. Hargraves promised.

"And see that he comes back alone?" added Ann anxiously.

"Yes; I'll manage it," Mrs. Hargraves assured her confidently.

Ann smiled a mocking, mischievous smile.

"It's dreadfully drastic," she teased. "You would like to know what it is. Good night."

She kissed her hand and vanished through the window.

"Little beast!" murmured Mrs. Hargraves, gazing after her with a smile. She would have liked to know what it was.

She went slowly to the door of the flat and opened it to find her husband standing at the threshold. He followed her into the sitting room. When he found it empty, he gazed around it somewhat blankly.

"It's very odd," he said, "but I could have declared that I heard women's voices in this room. I was sitting by the window of ours."

"Oh, you did. I was talking to Miss Anning," said Mrs. Hargraves calmly.

"Here?" cried the dean.

"Yes. She came to see me."

"To see *you*?" exclaimed the dean, in an incredulous tone.

"Yes, *me*; not Edward," said Mrs. Hargraves firmly.

The dean sniffed, a quite unbelieving sniff.

"And what were you talking about?" he asked.

"Edward. She's very much interested in Edward."

"I can well believe it. A young woman who leaves—er—garments—garments lying about a young man's room, would be interested in him." The dean spoke in a tone of bitter sarcasm.

"Oh, I told you that the explanation of that would be quite simple, and it is. She only hid those garments about the room to break off his engagement with Evangeline."

"She did? What for?" cried the dean.

"She didn't think Evangeline good enough for him."

"How dared she think? What business was it of hers?" cried the dean in a growing fury.

"Well, as a writer herself, she understands these things. She thinks his work very good indeed; and she couldn't bear to let it be ruined by his marrying the wrong wife."

"Well, I consider her interference monstrous—monstrous!" roared the dean. "Evangeline is a girl in a thousand!"

"Yes, but she wasn't the girl for Edward," said Mrs. Hargraves with the firmest conviction.

The dean sat down helplessly, purple in the face, nursing the incrimin-

ating cushion. He panted hard. Then he said:

"I don't believe a word of it—not a word! A thoroughly dangerous minx!"

"Oh, no, she isn't. She's a very nice girl—a very nice girl, indeed; and she's going to wake Edward up," said Mrs. Hargraves, still unperturbed.

"Wake Edward up?" gasped the dean. "One of these days she'll wake us all up. You'll find that she's gone and married him!"

"The important thing is that Edward should be awakened. It's most necessary to his work," said Mrs. Hargraves, still unmoved.

The dean groaned and glared at her. Very rarely indeed had she been in such persistent opposition to him. Oddly enough, on the other occasions, also, they had always been in opposition about Edward; and he had found that she had been right every time.

They were silent for perhaps a minute. Then they heard Edward thrusting his latchkey into the keyhole. The dean was too deeply stirred to perceive that he was still nursing the incriminating cushion.

Mr. William Lloyd entered, Edward at his heels.

"Hullo, mother," he said cheerfully, for the drink had soothed his ruffled spirit.

"I came down to hunt for some more garments to mend, and your father followed me," said Mrs. Hargraves.

"You ought not to waste your time on them," said Edward.

The word "garments" sent his eyes to the chair on which he had set the parcel, and he saw that it had gone.

"Have you put away the parcel that was on the chair in the corner?" he asked her.

"Oh, no; the owner came for it and took it away," said Mrs. Hargraves carelessly.

Edward's face fell, and he looked reproachfully at Mr. William Lloyd. The expert had failed him; he had declared that she would not return that night. The dean snorted.

"We just went round to the Piccadilly Hotel. You ought to go to it

some night, Mr. Hargraves, if you want to explore up-to-date London thoroughly," said Mr. Lloyd.

"Not to-night, Samuel. It's nearly eleven and you've had a tiring day," Mrs. Hargraves put in quickly.

"Not so tiring as disturbing—disturbing," said the dean gloomily.

Mr. William Lloyd was sensible that the atmosphere was still tense. But he could not make up his mind whether it was his duty to leave the family to itself and let it clear the atmosphere with a complete row, or whether he should, in the interests of Edward, remain and by his mere presence prevent any such row.

Mrs. Hargraves relieved him of all uncertainty. She looked at him and said:

"It's time we were all in bed."

It was clear to him that she had decided that the family would be better by itself; and since he had the fullest trust in her judgment, he took his leave without further delay.

"Come along, Samuel. You're looking quite tired," said Mrs. Hargraves, as soon as he had gone. "Edward, come up and fetch the things I have already mended. I expect there are holes in those you are wearing."

"I don't think there are," said Edward, not very confidently. He opened the door for her.

The dean rose, discovered the incriminating cushion on his knee, and, with a faint blush, dropped it into its place on the couch. Evidently its use, as a clew, had ceased. He followed them.

The room did not remain empty long. The fire escape creaked, and Ann, smiling mischievously and a little flushed, came through the window. On her arm she carried the nightgown that had caused such trouble.

She crossed the room to the hearth-rug, and, gazing into the mirror in the overmantel, she raised her hands to her hair. She drew out a hairpin, then turned sharply and gazed at the door. There was no sound in the hall. She turned to the mirror again and swiftly drew out hairpin after hairpin till the

mass of her hair came falling about her shoulders. She shook it back, and it hung down to her waist.

She looked around at the door again, hesitating. Then, with a defiant shrug, she slipped the nightgown over her head. It hung in easy folds over her tight-fitting frock.

She looked down, saw that the bottom of the frock as well as her shoes came below the bottom of the nightgown, and looked about the room for something to correct the discrepancy. A silk square on the end of the couch caught her eye. She took it up, piled the cushions against the end of the couch, stretched herself at full length on it, covered the bottom of her frock and her shoes with the silk square, and composed herself into the attitude of the sleeping beauty, or—as she considered it at the moment—of the awakening princess.

The minutes seemed in no haste to pass; in fact, they dragged. It was so hard to lie still and wait. Her conscience was clear—quite clear; but tradition and the instinct born of long-sustained tradition made her desperately uncomfortable. She longed to make a dash for the window and be done with it, but she set her teeth and endured. She had pledged herself to awaken Edward, and awaken him she would.

At last the sound of his latchkey in the door of the flat sent her heart into her mouth in a single jump; she turned hot; she turned cold.

Edward came down the passage quickly, went straight across the room to the window, and leaned out of it, looking down.

The action restored her courage in the most thorough fashion. She was again her cool, resourceful self. She watched him through her half-closed eyes quite calmly.

Edward turned, with a sigh, a sigh she heard quite clearly, and his eyes fell on the white figure stretched on his couch. They opened wide and wider; his mouth opened, too. He gasped twice heavily; then he came slowly to the couch and stared down at her.

Not a muscle in her face twitched; her breathing was quite smooth.

"Look here! You're not asleep, you know," he said, in a rather shaky voice.

"However did you guess?" asked Ann, opening her eyes, with an expression of the liveliest surprise.

Edward seemed to swallow a lump in his throat.

"What—what are you doing here—like this?" he said.

"Oh, I thought you'd be having a fit of the blues—in fact, I knew you would; and I thought it my duty to come and cheer you up."

"But—but— Oh, why will you do such outrageous things?" he cried.

"Why, don't you like it on me? You're not going to abuse it again!" said Ann, in an injured tone.

Edward took a few steps across the room; but his eyes were drawn back to her piquant, mischievous face.

"Look here!" he said. "I'm going out to post a letter. If you're not gone when I come back—I shall—I shall I—"

"What will you do?" asked Ann coolly.

"I shall—I shall— Oh, I'm losing my head!"

"Is that all?"

"Oh, this is beyond a joke! Beyond a joke! Here! Go—go, I tell you!" he cried.

Ann laughed her mischievous, provoking laugh.

"Again this lavish hospitality!" she said.

"Do you hear what I say? Go! I tell you I'm losing my head!" he cried.

Ann believed that she had achieved her end. At any rate, there was no drowsiness in Edward's eyes now; it was impossible to imagine eyes more awake, or more harried.

"Very well," she said crisply. "Go into that corner, turn your face to the wall, and shut your eyes."

Edward turned his head slowly, walked to the corner slowly, turned his

head to the wall, and closed his eyes. His natural indignation caused him to breathe uncommonly quickly.

Ann slipped off the couch, and said sharply:

"Now, don't you turn till I say you may!"

She slipped off the nightgown and rolled it up, went to the mirror, and, with swift, deft fingers, did up her hair.

Then she turned, and, leaning back against the mantelshelf, faced him with mocking eyes.

"Now you can open your eyes," she said.

He turned slowly, and again his eyes opened wide as they took in the fact of the change.

"Oh—it *was* a joke!" he said, in such a tone of mingled apprehension and relief that she laughed.

"Poor boy!" she said half pitifully, half mockingly.

He came slowly toward her, and a new bright light was burning in his eyes. She shrank from them a little; they were masterful and daunting.

"It was a shame—to mock me so," he said; and he caught her hand in a tight grip.

Ann tried to draw away, saying lightly:

"It was good for you."

"Yes," he said. "It was good for me. I am awake at last!" He dropped on one knee and kissed her hand again and again with burning lips. "Awakening princess, I'm awake at last!"

Ann was trembling and tugging to get her hand free.

"And you mustn't let me fall asleep again—ever. You awoke me—you must keep me awake—promise!" There was a compelling, almost triumphant note in his voice that thrilled her through.

She jerked her hand free and ran to the window in a panic, slipped through it, and paused to say in a shaken voice:

"But—but—you've got to wake me!"

She fled down the fire escape.



THE fundamental tragedy of life, from which varieties and gradations of human misery evolve, is the tragedy of the square peg in the round hole.

Dave Hunt was a very square peg, and circumstances forced him into a perfectly round hole. Born of seafaring people in a little town on the Maine coast, in the days when the Yankee clipper ships traced the world with their foaming wakes, the only hole open to Dave was the one a seaman should fit.

And Dave was not a seaman. His father was a master mariner, and his grandfather, and yet again his great-grandfather; and back of that was a long line of ancestors all of whom had wrested their living from the sea. All Dave's brothers were sailors, and his uncles on both sides of the Hunt house, but Dave was not.

Somewhere back in the ancestry of the seafaring family from which he sprang, some man of letters, or perhaps a wandering singer or vagabond actor, had bewitched a maid of the house of Hunt; else a male ancestor had taken to wife one in whose veins ran blood that quickened rather to the sound of the lute or the words of a philosopher than to tales of danger and daring.

The taint had lain dormant through generations of rugged, devil-may-care men and patient, enduring women, only to spread in poor Dave's blood and stain him with the dye of disgrace.

He was dark-eyed and had soft black

hair inclined to curl. The men of Dave's tribe were all blue-eyed, and their hair was the color of straw and stiff like bristles.

During recess of Dave's first day at school in his sixth year, Dan Harris slapped his face and Dave ran home, crying. That was the beginning of his life of shame. His father, "Bloody Mart" Hunt, as he was known in the bloody ports of the world, was home from a voyage, and he thrashed the boy as he thrashed sullen sailors; thrashed him close to death. And when Dave was able to leave his bed a week later, he drove him from the house to fight with the Harris boy. Dan Harris whipped him soundly, and from that day old Mart Hunt never spoke a civil word to his son.

Dave was not a weakling. He was tall and strong and well built when he was sixteen and made his first trip to sea, but he dreaded the sickening flesh-to-flesh clash of a rough-and-tumble fight as men dread the sting of a deadly snake. He forced himself to fight, as a man must who would be of the seamen of those days, but there was never any will to his fighting. He always shrank and was often whipped. What men who sneered at Dave did not know was that the thud of his fist on an opponent's cheek filled Dave with as much horror and loathing as the smash of a fist in his own face.

He was not a fighting man, and he was born to a life where the ability to fight and to crush was the funda-

mental one. He returned home after a two years' cruise, the butt of the ship, shunned by his mates, despised by his officers, and as good a navigator as the captain he had sailed with.

If he could not fight, he could learn navigation and had learned it, and had learned as well the technicalities of seamanship. He could handle a ship, but handle men he could not.

During his stay ashore after his first trip at sea, he fell in love with Nellie Wilkes. She was of his own age, a tall, grave-eyed Scotch girl, whose people were also of the sea. The engagement had been announced when Dan Harris returned from a voyage to China. On the street in front of the village post office, he thrashed Dave while Nellie looked on; thrashed him shamefully, and left him bloody and crumpled in the dust, while he took Nellie Wilkes by the arm and walked up the street with her.

That night Dave called on her, cringing and desperately ashamed; and the girl told him to go, and come back for her when he honestly could.

"You know what I mean, Davie," she said. "You'll know when you can come and take me without bringing shame to either of us, and you won't come until then. There's something wrong with you, boy, but I know you're honest. I'll be waiting, Davie."

And Davie went; went into the Caribbean Sea and to the South Seas; went to Valparaiso on the west coast and to Hongkong. He shipped from Hongkong to Liverpool as first mate aboard of a tea clipper, and finished the voyage in disgrace, as he had most of his voyages during the five years since he had left home.

He had not written to the grave-eyed Scotch girl who waited for him in the little Maine town. He had forced himself into dangerous positions, assuming desperate risks, always to shrink at the crucial moment; so that the test the girl had set for him had not been met.

He was in a sailors' boarding house in Liverpool for months. His weakness had become common knowledge

among shippers, and no berth was open to him.

Then he met Captain Moss. Moss was from Dave's town, an old friend of the boy's father. He was master of the full-rigged ship *Penobscot*, which lay at the Victoria Docks with her cargo stowed and ready to sail for New York.

Over a pot of ale in a little pub, the old captain questioned Dave and learned the story of his failure.

"My first mate was killed in a cuttin' scrape on the front last night," he said abruptly, when Dave had finished. "I'll ship ye with me, boy. My crew came aboard this mornin'. They're the toughest crew of packet rats that ever stunk up a fo'c'stle. They've been in blood boats on the western ocean in the good days, an' they're aboard o' the *Penobscot* for no better job than to lick the mates. The mate that tames that bucko gang'll be a man before ever we raise Sandy Hook light, or he'll be a corpse. Ye'd better be one o' the two than what ye are, my son. Will ye ship with me?"

Dave's body stiffened. "God, yes!" he said prayerfully. "I'd ship with the *Flyin' Dutchman* bound straight for hell if I thought meetin' the devil would take the kinks out o' me. I ain't afraid o' gettin' hurt, but when I go against it, my legs just turn back end to an' haul me away."

The old captain eyed the boy narrowly. "I believe ye're tellin' the truth," he said slowly. "Yer heart's all right, but ye got rabbit legs. Come along, sonny. We'll cure them legs o' that backin'-up habit this trip, or slip ye over the side in three cloths of canvas. Ye're the winner either way it falls out."

The second officer came into the cabin as Dave was stowing his stuff.

"Nasty lot forward, Mr. Hunt," he said. "The fun'll start early this trip, or I miss my guess."

Hunt nodded absently, and stood for a long minute with head bent like a man at prayer. Then he stood straight

and squared his shoulders. "Let's get 'em on deck an' look 'em over, Mr. Miller," he said.

The second mate followed him on deck, and took his place at one side of the forecandle doors.

"Turn to!" he bellowed. "An' lively about it, down there!"

Dave sprang onto the forecandle head and stood waiting. On the poop aft, the old captain—squat, bow-legged, pigeon-toed, with his hat pulled far down over his blue slits of eyes and his big, hard fist of a jaw thrust threateningly forward—watched him.

A tense little silence followed the second mate's order, and then came a sullen growl of: "Aye, aye." Led by an old sea lawyer, they slouched on deck single file, the scarred, mutinous worst set of outlaws of the western ocean.

Dave's voice was steady as he sang out his first order. "Reeve off that heel rope an' get that boom rigged out," he shouted. "Lively there!"

The men climbed onto the forecandle head with deliberate and insulting leisure. One of them, a burly six-footer, with the blue scar of a knife wound clean across one sunburned cheek, stopped stock-still, eyed the mate steadily for a moment, and laughed.

"I take my own time," he said loudly. "An' I can lick any slave driver that thinks I can't."

He spat on the deck near the mate's feet and swaggered away.

The second mate touched Dave's arm warningly.

"Careful, sir," he cautioned. "Not while we're in port. Soon as ever the towboat straightens her hawser an' we clear Black Rock, we'll draw a picture o' hell for these buckos, an' you can paint your own little chromo for the bad lad with the slit cheek."

As the men rove off the heel rope, slacked away the back ropes, and let go the martingale tripper, Dave Hunt stood motionless on the forecandle head, fighting the old, bitter, seemingly hopeless fight in which he had come off loser all his life.

In the man with the scarred cheek he had recognized Dan Harris, the

Dan who had whipped him as a school-boy, and later as a man; whipped him before the girl whom he loved and driven him from her.

He knew that Dan had recognized him and that the settlement with him was inevitable. It would be man to man between them, heaving breast to heaving breast, a primal, brute orgy of the passion for dominance and destruction, to the accompaniment of rock-hard fists thudding on flesh; and, as ever, Dave shrank from it. He must nerve and drive himself to endure what to the other man was as glad an event as a chase to a stag hound.

The jib topsail halyards were hooked onto the end of the boom for a topping lift, while the men in the starboard watch heaved her through the dock gates and got the tug's towline.

Hunt shook himself together as the *Penobscot* straightened her towline, and ordered the capstan manned to heave out the jib boom. Captain Moss, pacing the poop deck, stopped short and swore under his breath. There was a lack in the mate's voice that the captain's old ears had detected.

"Licked, — him!" he muttered. "Licked before ever he starts! They'll kill him!"

The men lined along the capstan bars, and the slow walk around began.

The captain faced forward, bending his short, bowed legs, crouching as a fighting dog 'sets for a rush.

"A little life in that crew, Mr. Hunt," he rasped out. "D'ye think this ship is a charity home for cripples?"

Dave nodded. "Lively there, men!" he sang out. "None of your lime-juice touches here."

The men stopped with one accord and eyed him. Dan Harris made a step forward. "You're lookin' for just what you're goin' to find," he said. "We've got the caliber o' this floatin' hell from them that's sailed in her before, an' we come aboard to trim your combs. You know me, you blubberin' coward! I been lickin' ye all your life an' I'm goin' to keep on."

The afterguard and the captain came forward as Harris talked, and grouped

on the forecastle head about Hunt. There were eight of them in all—the first, second, and third mates, the bos'n, sailmaker, cook, steward, and the skipper. Hunt stepped forward.

"Will you heave on that capstan now or shall I make you?" he asked quietly.

"Make hell!" Dan spat back.

One of the crew spat at the second mate, and the fight began. The steward and third officer grabbed up a foretack hook each, and went into the mêlée. The man at the wheel let go and came leaping forward to help out his mates. With a bellowed roar, the pilot left the poop deck, put wheel amidship, and fought his way to the skipper's side. The captain had jerked a belaying pin from the fife rail, and as the helmsman jumped on the poop ladder, the pin took him fair across the eyes, and he lay quiet where he fell.

The fight on the forecastle head was a disorganized rough-and-tumble, and in the tangle of struggling men Hunt and Harris had been separated. Hunt was back to back with the second mate, fighting well, but, as always, sick and without heart.

Sheath knives flashed in the sun, and the fighting men slipped and slid in the blood that streamed over the deck. A gun cracked, and then another. Captain Moss sprang on to the forecastle head with a gun in each hand, and the commanding roar of his voice rang above the shouts and screams of the fighting men and the crack of the guns.

"Vast that blood work, you spawn o' hell! 'Vast that, or I'll spill sunlight through the pack of ye!"

He let drive over the heads of the mob with his guns, and, lowering the muzzles, carefully winged two of the men in the arms.

"Ye're worth more to me to work this ship than ye are for shark bait, or the lot of ye'd go over the rail without a canvas coat for the fish to eat through!" the old man shouted.

The crew hesitated for a moment, and then broke for cover, as the captain shattered the upraised hand of another of their number. They leaped from the forecastle head, and went

diving down onto the first, like frightened beavers into their houses. As Dan Harris sprang toward the hatchway, the captain leaped down in front of him, and held him under his gun.

"Not so fast there for you, my man!" he said grimly. "The rest can go, but you're the man that sassed my mate, an' my mate ain't had his chance at ye yet. You'll kill him if you can, an', if you can't, there's none will stop him from makin' hell coal out of ye if he wants. Ye'll go to it bare-fisted, an' man to man."

Harris leered. "A fine bargain!" he sneered. "I can lick the pup an' well I know it; but ye'll handle me yourself if I do."

"If ye lick him, ye go free," the captain answered. "Ye've got my word. Strip yourself, Mr. Hunt. An' you, too, my man, strip an' hop to it."

The two men threw off their shirts and shoes, and while the captain and all the members of the afterguard gathered on the poop to watch the fight, approached each other just aft the forward house.

Dan swung first, but Dave ducked, and landed flush on the big man's grinning mouth with his right. The smile disappeared in a smother of blood. Dan reeled, but caught himself and came back with a rush. It was then that Dave gave way. The smash of his fist on the man's mouth, the warm blood on his knuckles, the sickening thud of them against the flesh, had brought on the old nausea and heartsickness, and, as Dan rushed, Dave retreated, cowered, and from that moment was a doomed man. He fought on, but he fought half-heartedly.

It was not until he lay inert and unconscious in the lee scuppers, with Dan triumphantly pounding his battered face, that the captain interfered. He leaped from the poop with an oath and tore Dan from the boy's prostrate body.

"I said it," Dan raged at him. "You told me he was mine if I got him, an' now ye'll manhandle me for beatin' an officer."

"Go for'ad, an' as long as you do your work on this ship, ye'll not be

bothered," the captain returned shortly. "I meant ye should kill him if ye could, but I knew his father."

Dan swaggered forward to the fore-castle, and, with a snort of disgust, the old man lifted Dave by the band of his dungarees and lugged his limp form aft as one lugs a sack of wheat.

It was two days before Dave was able to be on deck. When he reported, the captain made no mention of the affair. He treated the boy as he would have treated one whom he had never known; spoke with him of the work, but of nothing else. The rest of the afterguard modeled their behavior upon that of the captain, and, except in his official capacity, Dave was left alone.

The crew obeyed his orders because they had been cowed by the other officers, and while there was never any open sign of disrespect shown, they managed to convey their contempt of him and his cowardice in a thousand little ways that were more galling to the boy than open mutiny.

It was during the afternoon watch on the fourteenth day out that the monotony of the boy's misery and loneliness was ended. It was the port watch on deck. The forepart of the day had been clear. At noon, after the observations had been taken, the sky became overcast, and a heavy bank of clouds rose on the starboard bow.

At four bells the old man came on deck and looked aloft to see that the yards were trimmed and everything standing full.

"Looks kind o' dirty out there on the starboard bow, Mr. Hunt," he said. "Guess we're goin' to have a squall from the nor'west an' a stiffener, too."

"Yes, sir," Dave answered him. "An' I noticed the glass was goin' down."

The captain squinted anxiously at the lowering horizon on the starboard quarter.

"Douse some of that top-hamper," he ordered sharply. "Take in all the light sails, clew up the royals, an' haul down the jib topsail. Lay aloft there an' furl them."

When the light canvas was furled

and the men on deck again, the old man ordered the topgallant sails clewed up and the fly jib taken in.

The squall off the starboard bow grew blacker and blacker, and the barometer fell steadily. The wind gradually died out, and the sky turned an ominous black green. The old man laid his ear to the rail, and the roar of the oncoming squall sounded clear to him.

"All hands on deck an' snug her down!" he shouted, straightening up.

"All hands on deck," the bos'n's long-drawn cry echoed through the ship.

The starboard watch tumbled on deck and took their station aft.

"Stand by your upper topsail hal-yards fore an' aft," the old man yelled from the poop.

"Man your downhauls an' start away your halyards fore an' aft," the first and second mates sang out as with one voice.

The men hauled away on the downhauls, and the upper topsail yards came on the caps.

"Lay aloft both watches an' furl those topsails," the old man sang out from the break of the poop.

The crew went up the ratlines, and lay out along the yards.

"Pass those gaskets good an' solid," Dave called out to the men aloft.

The upper topsails furled, the men lay down from aloft.

"Take in the outer an' inner jib," Dave ordered; "an' furl them snug, an' be sure your gaskets are well passed."

Six men ran out on the boom and snugged up the jibs with double gaskets.

"Haul up the courses, Mr. Hunt," the old man ordered. "Furl the crossjack an' mainsail. Haul the foresail up snug an' pass the yardarm gaskets, an' we'll let her stand till the squall's over."

Of a sudden the breeze died out. Both watches were aloft furling the mainsail and crossjack, and tying up the yardarms of the foresail. On the horizon a thin streak of white showed against the black of sky and sullen sea, and the distant roar of the coming storm swelled loud.

"Lay down from aloft there as soon as you can, men," Dave called out, "or she'll flatten ye against that riggin' so ye can't get down."

Sliding down the backstays, and piling down the rigging, the last man reached the deck with the roaring streak of white a short mile away off the starboard bow.

"Double sheet those staysails an' be quick about it," Dave yelled, "an' brace up those yards. Clew up the mizzen lower topsail. Lively, men, lively, or we'll lose that canvas! Clew up the lower foretopsail, start away the sheets both sides, an' man your spillin' lines an' clew lines."

As the sheets were started, the squall struck. The smash of the wind on the canvas sounded like the report of a heavy cannon. The foretopsail flew out of the bolt ropes, and streamed away off the lee beam as the ship heeled over to port, burying her lee rail under the water.

The starboard watch was more fortunate with the mizzen topsail, for when the squall struck, it was in hand and the gaskets were being passed.

The ship was well snugged down, but she dived into the heavy seas to her knightheads.

The old man and Dave stood together in the lee of weather cloth in the mizzen rigging.

"How's the glass, sir?" Dave asked, funneling his hands close to the captain's ear. "Still goin' down?"

The old man shook his head. "She's at a standstill," he bellowed. "I don't think she'll be over a twelve-hour gale."

He thrust his face forward and peered sharply at his mate. The boy was calm and sure, eying the rigging and the action of the ship, and apparently concerned with nothing else.

The old captain turned from him, shaking his head perplexedly. "Damned if he don't beat me!" he muttered. "He's no more scared 'n if he was home ridin' a rockin'-chair."

A tremendous head sea, heavier than any that had come before, came along, and the ship dived into it, burying her

jib boom deep. She staggered free, with her flying jib boom snapped off at the iron band of the jib guys.

As she rose, the foretopgallant mast crackled and came down with the after send of the ship. Aloft, the topgallant mast, topgallant, and royal yards, with headstays, backstays, and all running rigging hanging to leeward over the topsail yards, were a tangled mass of destructive wreckage, swinging far out to leeward on the lee roll, to smash back against the foremast as the ship rolled to windward.

The flying jib boom hung by the head gear, and, as her bow rose, the wrecked mass came clear of the water, threatening to carry away the jib boom at the cap.

The captain sprang to the forward railing of the poop deck, with his megaphone in his hand.

"Lay aloft an' cut away that wreckage!" he screamed out at the second mate. "Get a rope on that main royal stay rove through a tail block at the foretopmast head, before we lose that main royal mast. An' then cut that runnin' gear loose, an' let the wreckage go to hell over the side!"

As the men started aloft with knives and hacksaws, the old man turned to Dave.

"If you're a man, get that head gear clear before she takes the rest with it," he yelled at him through his megaphone.

Dave leaped forward. As he ran by the weather side of the forward house, he came on Harris, cutting away the lanyards of the foretopgallant and royal backstays.

Dave leaped into the carpenter shop and came running out with a hacksaw and a marlinespike. He gripped Harris by the arm and held out the marlinespike to him.

"You're brave, are you?" he screamed at him. "You're brave? Then come along with me! I'll show you how much of a coward I am!"

He leaped on to the forecastle head, and raced forward to the knightheads, shouting back to the bos'n to get his

ax and cut away the flying jib boom guy lanyards.

Harris was at his heels as he grasped the man ropes and sprang out on the tossing jib boom.

Dan, hanging on to the martingale and sitting on the back ropes, struggled to unscrew the shackle that held the flying martingale stay, while Dave on the jib boom cut frantically at the wire gear and foot ropes.

At every dive of the ship, the man clinging to the martingale was buried to the waist in the sea.

The wire gear cut clear, Dave wrapped his legs about the jib boom, and shouted to the struggling man below:

"Can't you unscrew that shackle?"

Harris held up a broken marlinespike and shook his head.

Dave held down his hacksaw. "Take that, and if you can't cut her loose, get back on deck and let a man down there," he shrieked at him.

Dan grasped the saw, and with a few frantic strokes had the last link in the flying martingale stay that held the wreckage half sawed off, when the ship dived suddenly into a tremendous head sea, burying both men far under the rushing green swelter of water.

With arms and legs gripped tight around the boom, Dave clung. As she rose, the half-cut link snapped and the wreckage went clear, floating away on the weather bow.

Dave cleared his eyes of water and peered after it. Hanging to a piece of boom was Dan, the blood flowing from a nasty cut in his head.

Dave sprang back along like a cat and gained the forecastle head.

He tore the cover off the tub in which the deep-sea lead line was coiled, made a bowline, and throwing it over him, sprang erect on the weather rail, and out into the sea.

The wreckage was a full hundred and fifty feet to windward.

He reached it, swimming with great, overhand, lunging strokes, threw off the bowline, and made it fast to Dan. As he made the line fast, he grasped Dan by the chin and held his face up. The

bully's eyes were shot with a great, pitiable terror. Dave looked deep into them, questioningly at first, then with a glad certainty dawning in his own.

Suddenly he laughed aloud and gave the signal to haul in.

Ropes were lowered as they came alongside, and the old man himself hauled Dave on board.

"Ye may be a ——— coward, Mr. Hunt," he said to him as they entered the cabin, "but I hope I'll have one like ye in my crew if ever I go overboard in a squall."

Dave turned on him. "If ye ever say 'coward' to me again, I'll split ye wide open barehanded, if I hang for it," he said grimly.

Four days later the *Penobscot* docked in the East River. Since the day of the storm, Dave had spoken to no man on the ship, except to give an order. He rebuffed all attempts at conversation by the officers or the men, and lived alone a hero, as he had lived alone a coward.

At noon the day after they docked, the decks were all washed down, the sails in the lockers, and the ship pumped out.

As the crew were going ashore, Dan Harris dropped his dunnage on deck, and went aft to the mate's room. "Things ain't been right between us, Mr. Hunt," he said sheepishly, when Dave opened the door. "I don't guess you care about bein' friendly with me, but I want to thank ye for what ye done, anyhow."

Dave eyed him coldly. "Ye want to thank me, eh?" he inquired. "Never mind that. Are you ready to go ashore?"

"Yes, sir."

"I'll go with you."

He led the mystified man on deck, and walked ahead of him over the gangplank to the dock.

There he turned on him. "Set down your dunnage," he said shortly.

"Why, what——" Dan began.

"I'm goin' to lick you within a spare inch of your worthless life," Dave an-

swered him coldly. "I'm goin' to lick you as I always could lick you any time I was minded to dirty my hands up with your filthy hide. You're a rotten, dirty coward an' you always were. Slip that jacket o' yours an' come to it."

And Dave whipped him; whipped him within the spare inch of death's door as he had promised; whipped him without exultance, but also without fear, while the captain walked the poop, hugging himself in an ecstasy of delight. And when more blows might have meant death to the bloodied form he held in chancery, Dave dropped it care-

lessly on the dock, and went on board without a backward look.

"I'd like to have the second mate tally this cargo, sir," he told the captain as he approached the poop. "I want to leave at once."

"Leave?" the captain echoed. "Why? Where you goin' in all this hurry?"

"I'm goin' home to get married," Dave returned shortly. "An' I'm goin' whether you like it or no."

He strode into the companionway, and the old man barked his fist on the monkey rail.

"A man, by——!" he swore at the crossjack yard.



THE RESTLESS GOD

LOVE, the unreturning!" so they sighed.

"Love was kind to yearning

Hearts at April-tide,

Yet would not abide—

Quickly spurning!

Where we tarried hopeful, now we wait and fear.

Love, the quickly spurning, left us here!"

So? You feared to follow where he went?

Love with hearts so hollow

Never rests content.

On he flames, unspent.

Like Apollo

Love demands brave service—dauntless hearts and deeds—

Girded loins, to follow where he leads!

Love, the unreturning? True! He flees.

Not for all your yearning

Could he rest at ease

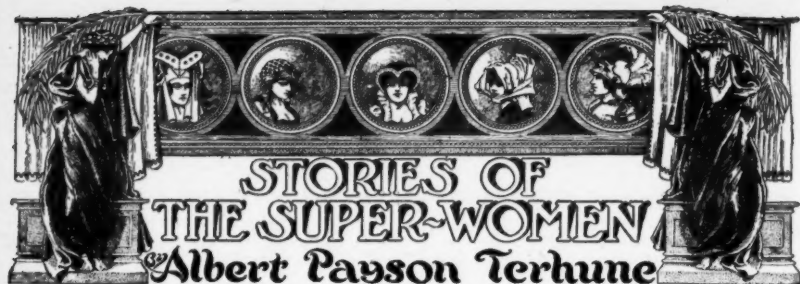
'Mid your vines and trees.

Lovers burning,

Follow! Deserts flower where his feet have gone.

Love, the unreturning, leads you on!

WILLIAM ROSE BENET.



STORIES OF THE SUPER-WOMEN

Albert Payson Terhune

Find the Woman. You will find her in almost every generation, in almost every country, in almost every big city—the super-woman. She is not the typical adventuress; she is not a genius. The reason for her strange power is occult. When philosophers have thought they had segregated the cause—the formula—what you will—in one particular super-woman or group of super-women, straight-way some new member of the clan has arisen who wields equal power with her notable sisters, but who possesses none of the traits that made them irresistible. And the seekers of formulas are again at sea. What makes the super-woman? Is it beauty? Cleopatra and Rachel were homely. Is it daintiness? Marguerite de Valois washed her hands but twice a week. Is it wit? Pompadour and Du Barry were avowedly stupid in conversation. Is it youth? Diane de Poitiers and Ninon de l'Enclos were wildly adored at sixty. Is it the subtle quality of feminism? George Sand, who numbered her admirers by the score—poor Chopin in their foremost rank—was not only ugly, but disgustingly mannish. So was Semiramis. The nameless charm is found almost as often in the masculine, “advanced” woman as in the delicate, ultrafeminine damsel. Here are the stories of super-women who conquered at will. Some of them smashed thrones; some were content with wholesale heart-smashing. Wherein lay their secret? Or rather, their secrets? For seldom did any two of them follow the same plan of campaign.

LOLA MONTEZ,

The dancer who kicked over a throne.

HER MAJESTY'S Theater in London, one night in 1843, was jammed from pit to roof. Lumley, the astute manager, had whispered that he had a “find.” His whisper had been judiciously pitched in a key that enabled it to penetrate St. James Street clubs, Park Lane boudoirs, even City counting-rooms.

The managerial whisper had been augmented by a “private view,” to which many journalists and a few influential men about town had been bidden. These lucky guests had shifted the pitch from whisper to paean. By word of mouth and by ardent quill the song of praise had spread. One of the latter forms of tribute had run much in this rural-newspaper form:

A brilliant *divertissement* is promised by Mr. Lumley for the forthcoming performance of “The Tarantula,” at Her Majesty's. Thursday evening will mark the British début of the mysterious and bewitchingly beautiful Castilian dancer, Lola Montez.

Through the delicate veins of this lovely daughter of dreamy Andalusia sparkles the *sang azur* which is the birthright of the hidalgo families alone. In her is embodied not alone the haughty lineage of centuries of noble ancestry, but all the fire and mystic charm that are the precious heritage of the Southland.

At a private view, yesterday, at which your correspondent had the honor to be an invited guest, this peerless priestess of Terpsichore—

And so on for well-nigh a column of adjective-starred panegyric, which waxed more impassioned as the dictionary's supply of unrepeatd superlatives waned. This was before the day of the

recognized press agent. Folk had a way of believing what they read. Hence the gratifyingly packed theater to witness the mysterious Spaniard's début.

Royalty itself, surrounded by tired gentlemen in waiting who wanted to sit down and could not, occupied one stage box. In the front of another, lolled Lord Ranelagh, arbiter of London fashion and accepted authority on all matters of taste—whether in dress, dancers, or duels. Ranelagh, recently come back from a tour of the East, divided with royalty the reverent attention of the stalls.

The pit whistled and clapped in merry impatience for the appearance of the danseuse. The West End section of the house waited in equal, if more subdued eagerness, and prepared to follow the possible expression of Ranelagh's large-toothed, side-whiskered visage as a signal for its own approval or censure of the much-advertised Lola's performance.

The first scene of the opera passed almost unnoticed. Then the stage was cleared and a tense hush gripped the house. A fanfare of cornets; and from the wings a supple, dark girl bounded.

A whirlwind of welcome from pit and gallery greeted her. She struck a sensuous pose in the stage's exact center. The cornetists laid aside their instruments.

Guitars and mandolins set up a throbbing string overture. Lola drew a deep breath, flashed a vivid Spanish smile on the audience at large, and took the first languid step of her dance.

Then it was that the dutiful signal seekers cast covert looks once more at Lord Ranelagh. That ordinarily stolid nobleman was leaning far forward in his stage box, mouth and eyes wide, staring with incredulous amaze at the posturing Andalusian. Before her first step was complete, Ranelagh's astonishment burst the shackles of silence.

"Gad!" he roared, his excited voice smashing through the soft music and penetrating to every cranny of the theater. "Gad! It's—it's little Betty James!"

He broke into a Homeric guffaw. A

toady who sat beside him hissed sharply. The hiss and the guffaw were cues quite strong enough for the rest of the house. A sizzling, swishing chorus of hisses went up from the stalls, was caught by the pit, and tossed aloft in swelling crescendo to the gallery, where it was intensified to treble volume.

Lola's artistically made-up face had gone white under its rouge and pearl powder at Ranelagh's shout. Now it flamed crimson. The girl danced on; she was gallant, a thoroughbred to the core—even though she chanced to be thoroughbred Irish instead of thoroughbred Spanish—and she would not be hissed from the stage.

But now "boos" mingled with the hisses. And Ranelagh's immoderate laughter was caught up by scores of people who did not in the least know at what they were laughing.

The storm was too heavy too weather. Lumley growled an order. Down swooped the curtain, leaving the crowd booing on one side of it, and Lola raging on the other.

Which ended the one and only English theatrical experience of Lola Montez, the dreamy Andalusian dancer from County Limerick, Ireland. That night at Almack's, Lord Ranelagh told a somewhat lengthy story—a story whose details he had picked up in the East—which was repeated with interesting variations next day on Rotten Row, in a dozen clubs, in a hundred drawing-rooms. Here is the gist of the tale:

Some quarter century before the night of Lola's London première—and dernière—an Irish girl, Eliza Oliver by name, had caught the errant fancy of a great man. The man chanced to be Lord Byron, at that time loafing about the Continent and trying, outwardly at least, to live up to the mental image of himself that was just then enshrined in the hearts of several thousand demure English schoolmaids.

Byron soon tired of Miss Oliver—it is doubtful whether he ever saw her daughter—and the Irish beauty soon afterward married a fellow countryman

of her own—Sir Edward Gilbert, an army captain.

The couple's acquaintances being overmuch given to prattling about things best forgotten, Gilbert exchanged to a regiment in India, taking along his wife and her little girl. The child had meantime been christened Maria Dolores Eliza Rosanna; which, for practical purposes, was blue-penciled down to "Betty."

Seven years afterward, Gilbert died. His widow promptly married Captain Craigie, a solid, worthy, Scotch comrade at arms of her late husband's. Craigie generously assumed all post-Byronic responsibilities, along with the marriage vows. And, at his expense, Betty was sent to Scotland—later to Paris—to be educated.

At sixteen the girl was a beauty—and a witch as well. She and her mother spent a season at Bath, a resort that still retained in those days some shreds of its former glory. And there—among a score of younger and poorer admirers—two men sued for Betty's hand.

One was Captain James, a likable, susceptible, not over-clever army officer, home on furlough from India. The other was a judge, very old, very gouty, very rich.

And Betty's mother chose the judge, out of all the train of suitors, as her son-in-law-elect. Years had taught worldly wisdom to the once-gay Eliza.

Betty listened in horror to the old man's mumbled vows. Then, at top speed, she fled to Captain James. She told James that her mother was seeking to sacrifice her on the altar of wealth. James, like a true early-Victorian hero, rose manfully to the occasion.

He and Betty eloped, were married by a registrar, and took the next outbound ship for India.

It was a day of long and slow voyages. Betty beguiled the time on shipboard by a course of behavior such as would have prevented the most charitable fellow passenger from mistaking her for a returning missionary.

There were many Anglo-Indians—officers and civilians—aboard. And

Betty's flirtations, with all and sundry, speedily became the scandal of the ship. By the time the vessel docked in India, there were dozens of women ready to spread abroad the bride's fame in her new home land.

English society in India was, and is, in many respects like that of a provincial town. In the official and army set, one member's business is everybody's business.

Nor did Betty take any pains to erase the impressions made by her volunteer advance agents. Like a blazing star, she burst upon the horizon of India army life. Gloriously beautiful, willful, capricious, brilliant, she speedily had a horde of men at her feet—and a still larger number of women at her throat.

Her flirtations were the talk of mess-room and bungalow. Heartlessly, she danced on hearts. There was some subtle quality about her that drove men mad with infatuation.

And her husband? He looked on in horrified wonder. Then he argued and even threatened. At last he shut up and took to drink. Betty wrote contemptuously to a friend, concerning this last phase:

He spends his time in drinking, and then in sleeping like a gorged boa constrictor.

James was liked by the English out there, and his friends fiercely resented the domestic treatment that was turning a popular and promising officer into a sodden beast.

One morning James rode away over the hills and neglected to come back. His wife never again heard of him. And at his exit from the scene, the storm broke; a storm of resentment that swept Betty James out beyond even the uttermost fringe of Anglo-Indian society.

She hunted up her generous old stepfather, Craigie, and induced him to give her a check for a thousand pounds, to get rid of her forever. She realized another thousand on her votive offerings of jewelry; and, with this capital, she shook the dust of India from her pretty slippers.

Here ends Lord Ranelagh's scurrilous narrative, told at Almack's.

On her way back to England, Betty broke her journey at Spain, remaining there long enough to acquire three valuable assets—a Spanish accent, a semi-tolerable knowledge of Spanish dancing, and the ultra-Spanish name of Lola Montez, by which—through mere courtesy to her wishes—let us hereafter call her. Then she burst upon the British public—only to retire amid a salvo of hisses and catcalls.

With the premature fall of the curtain at Her Majesty's Theater, begins the *Odyssey of Lola Montez*.

She went from London to Germany, where she danced for a time, to but scant applause, at second-rate theaters, and at last could get no more engagements.

Thence she drifted to Brussels, where, according to her own later statement, she was "reduced to singing in the streets to keep from starving." Contemporary malice gives a less creditable version of her means of livelihood in the Belgian capital. It was a period of her life—the black hour before the garish dawn—of which she never afterward would talk.

But before long she was on the stage again; this time at Warsaw, during a revolution. She danced badly and was hissed. But the experience gave her an idea.

She went straightway to Paris, where, by posing as an exiled Polish patriot, she secured an engagement at the Porte St. Martin Theater. It was her last hope.

The "Polish patriot" story brought a goodly crowd to Lola's first performance in Paris. But, after a single dance, she heard the horribly familiar sound of hisses.

And at the first hiss, her Irish spirit blazed into a crazy rage; a rage that was the turning point of her career.

Glaring first at the spectators like an angry cat, Lola next glared around the stage for a weapon wherewith to wreak her fury upon them. But the stage was bare.

Frantic, she kicked off her slippers, and then tore loose her heavy-buckled garters. With these intimate missiles

she proceeded to pelt the grinning occupants of the front row, accompanying the volley with a high-pitched, venomous Billingsgate tirade in three languages.

That was enough. On the instant the hisses were drowned in a salvo of applause that shook the rafters. Lola Montez had arrived. Paris grabbed her to its big, childish, fickle heart.

She was a spitfire and she couldn't dance. But she had given the Parisians a genuine thrill. She was a success. Two slippers and two garters, hurled with feminine rage and feminine inaccuracy into the faces of a line of bored theatergoers, had achieved more for the fair artillerist than the most exquisite dancing could have hoped to.

Lola was the talk of the hour. An army of babbling Ranelaghs could not now have dimmed her fame.

Dujarrier, all-powerful editor of *La Presse*, laid his somewhat shopworn heart at her feet. Dumas, Balzac, and many another celebrity sued for her favor. Her reign over the hearts of men had recommenced.

But Lola Montez never rode long on prosperity's wave crest. A French adorer, jealous of Dujarrier's prestige with the lovely dancer, challenged the great editor to a duel. Dujarrier, for love of Lola, accepted the challenge—and was borne off the field of honor with a bullet through his brain.

Lola sought to improve the occasion by swathing herself somberly and right becomingly in crape, and by vowing a vendetta against the slayer. But before she could profit by the excellent advertisement, Dumas chanced to say something to a friend—who repeated it to another friend, who repeated it to all Paris—that set the superstitious, mid-century Frenchmen to looking askance at Lola and to avoiding her gaze. Said Monte Cristo's creator:

"She has the evil eye. She will bring a curse upon any man who loves her."

And by that—perhaps—senseless speech, Dumas drove Lola Montez from Paris. But she took with her all her newborn prestige as a danseuse. She

took it first to Berlin. There she was bidden to dance at a court reception tendered by King Frederick William, of Prussia.

The rooms of the palace, on the night of the reception, were stiflingly hot. Lola asked for a glass of water. A much-belaced and bechained chamberlain—to whom the request was repeated by a footman—sent word to Lola that she was there to dance for the king and not to order her fellow servants around.

The net result of this answer was another Irish rage. Lola, regardless of her pompous surroundings, rushed up to the offending chamberlain and loudly made known her exact opinion of him. She added that she was tired of dealing with understrappers, and that, unless the king himself would bring her a glass of water, there would be no dreamy Spanish dance at the palace that night.

The scandalized officials moved forward in a body to hustle the *lèse-majesté* perpetrator out of the sacred precincts. But the rumpus had reached the ears of King Frederick William himself, at the far end of the big room. His majesty came forward in person to learn the cause of the disturbance. He saw a marvelously beautiful woman in a marvelously abusive rage.

To the monarch's amused queries, the chamberlain bleated out the awful, sacrilegious, *schrecklich* tale of Lola's demand. The king did not order her loaded with chains and haled to the donjon keep. Instead, he gave a laughing order—this gracious and gentle sovereign who had so keen an eye for beauty.

A moment later a lackey brought the king a glass of water. First gallantly touching the goblet to his own lips, his majesty handed it with a deep obeisance to Lola.

Except for the advertisement it gave her, she could gain no real advantage from this odd introduction to a king. For, next day, she received a secret, but overwhelmingly official hint that an instant departure not only from Berlin, but from Prussia, too, would be one of

the wisest moves in her whole career. She went.

To Bavaria, and to greatness.

Lola Montez, the Spanish dancer, was billed at a Munich theater. She danced there but three times. For, on the third evening, the royal box was occupied by a drowsy-eyed sexagenarian whose uniform coat was ablaze with decorations.

The old gentleman was Ludwig I. *Dei gratia*, King of Bavaria; a ruler who, up to this time, had been beloved of his subjects; and whose worst vice, in his people's eyes, was that he encouraged art rather than arms.

Ludwig watched breathlessly while Lola danced. Afterward he sent for her to come to the royal box and be presented to him. She never danced again in Bavaria.

For next day Ludwig introduced her at court as "my very good friend." Lola dazzled Munich with her jewels and her equipages. The king presented her with a huge and hideous mansion. He stretched the laws by having her declared a Bavarian subject. And, having done that, he bestowed upon her the titles of "Baroness von Rosenthal and Countess von Landfeld." Next, he granted her an annuity of twenty thousand florins. Things were coming Lola's way, and coming fast.

The Bavarians did not dislike her—at first. When Ludwig forced his queen to receive her and to pin upon the dancer emeritus' breast the Order of St. Theresa, there was, to be sure, a shocked murmur. But it soon died down. Had Lola been content with her luck, she might have continued indefinitely in her new and delightfully comfortable mode of life.

But, according to Lola's theory, a mortal who is content with success would be content with failure. And she strove to play a greater rôle than the fat one assigned to her by the love-sick old king.

She had read of Pompadour and other royal favorites whose vagrom whims swayed the destinies of Europe. She sought to be a world power; the power behind the throne; the woman

who could mold the politics of a dynasty. And she laid her plans accordingly.

It was not even a dream, this new ambition of Lola's. It was a comic-opera fantasy. Bavaria, at best, was only a little German state with no special voice in the congress of nations. And Lola herself had no more aptitude for politics than she had for dancing. Nor did she stop to consider that Germans in 1846 were much more likely to tolerate a fair foreigner's meddling with their puppet king's domestic affairs than with matters of public welfare.

But Lola Montez ever did the bulk of her sane thinking when it was too late. So she proceeded to put her idiotic plans into operation.

First, she cajoled King Ludwig into dismissing in a body his perfectly capable and well-liked ministry. As delighted with that success as is the village cut-up when he pulls a chair from under the portly constable—and with even less wholesome fear of the result to herself—Lola next persuaded the king to change his whole policy of state. Then things began to happen.

One morning Lola awoke in her ugly and costly mansion to find the street in front of the door blocked by a highly unfriendly mob, whose immediate ambition seemed to be the destruction of the house and herself. This was the signal for one more Irish rage, the last on public record.

Lola, throwing a wrapper over her nightgown, snatched up a loaded pistol, and, pushing aside her screaming servants, ran out on the front steps.

At sight of her the crowd roared in fury and made a dash for the steps. Lola retaliated by emptying her revolver into the advancing mob. Events had moved rapidly since the primitive days when she was content to bombard her detractors with slippers and garter buckles.

The rioters halted before the fusillade. Before they could combine for another rush, and while Lola from the topmost step was reviling them in her best and fiercest German, a company

of the royal bodyguard, headed by the old king himself, charged through the crowd and rescued the angry woman.

But, though Ludwig had just saved her from a sudden and extremely unpleasant form of death, he was not strong enough to stem the avalanche of public opinion that crashed down upon her. This same avalanche proceeded to brush Lola out of her big and hideous house, to knock away from her her titles of baroness and countess and her twenty-thousand-florin annuity, and to whirl her across the Bavarian frontier with stern instructions never to return.

Incidentally, poor old King Ludwig came in for so much unpopularity on her account that he was forced to abdicate. Thus, in her own fall from power, Lola had also dragged a once-popular king off his throne; a noteworthy achievement, in that pre-Gaby-Deslys period, for an Irish girl with a variegated past.

The Ludwig scandal preceded Lola wherever she tried to go. The divinity that hedges a king was everywhere on guard against her. The gate to practically every country in Europe was slammed in her face. Folk fell to repeating Dumas' "evil-eye" words, and to applying them to discrowned old Ludwig. Lola Montez was not wanted anywhere; certainly nowhere east of the Atlantic.

So she came to New York. Here there were no kings to bar her out lest they share Ludwig's fate. And Americans knew little and cared less about the evil eye. If Lola Montez could make good on the stage, America was willing to welcome her. If not, it had no further general interest in her.

Moreover, she was well past thirty; at an age when the first glory of a woman's siren charms may reasonably be supposed to be slightly blurred. New Yorkers were curious to see her on account of her history; but that was their only interest in her.

She danced at the old Broadway Theater. People thronged the theater for the first few performances. Then, having gazed their fill on the Bavarian throne's wrecker and found she could

not dance, they stayed away; and Lola ended her engagement at the Broadway to the hackneyed "beggarly array of empty benches."

An enterprising manager—P. T. Barnum, if I remember aright—raked up the Byron story and starred Lola in a dramatization of Lord Byron's poem "Mazeppa." But people here had already looked at her, and the production was a failure. Next she appeared in one or two miserably written plays, based on her own European adventures. These, too, failed. She then wrote a beauty book that had a small sale, and wrote also a drearily stupid volume of humor, designed as a mock "Guide to Courtship."

On her way to America, Lola had stopped in England long enough to captivate and marry a British army officer, Heald by name. But she soon left him, and arrived in this country without visible matrimonial ties.

New York having tired of her, Lola went West. She created a brief, but lively furore among the gold-boom towns along the Pacific coast; not so much by reason of her story as for the wondrous charm that was still hers. She gave lectures in California, and then made an Australian tour.

Coming back from the Antipodes, she settled for a time in San Francisco. There, in rather quick succession, she married twice. One of her two California spouses was Hull, the famous pioneer newspaper owner, of San Francisco.

But she quickly wearied of the West, and of her successive husbands. Back she came to New York. And—to the wonder of all, and the incredulity of

most—she there announced that, though she had been a great sinner, she was now prepared to devote the rest of her life to penance.

Strangely enough, her new resolve was not a pose. Even in her heyday she had given lavishly to charity. Now she took up rescue work among women. She did much good in a quiet way, spending what money she had on the betterment of her sex's unfortunates, and toiling night and day in their behalf.

Under this unaccustomed mode of life, Lola's health went to pieces. She was sent to a sanitarium in Astoria, L. I. And there, in poverty and half forgotten, she died. Kindly neighbors scraped together enough money to bury her.

Thus ended in wretched anticlimax the meteor career of Lola Montez; wonder woman and wanderer; overthrower of a dynasty and worse-than-mediocre dancer. Some one has called her "the last of the great adventuresses." And that is perhaps her best epitaph.

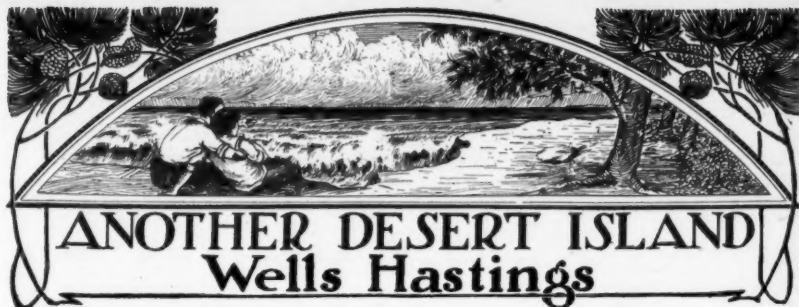
Her neglected grave—in Greenwood Cemetery, in Brooklyn, by the way—bears no epitaph at all. That last resting place of a very tired woman is marked merely by a plain headstone, whose dimmed lettering reads:

Mrs. Eliza Gilbert. Died June 16, 1861. Age 42.

One trembles to think of the near-royal Irish rage that would have possessed Lola if, at her baroness-countess-Bavarian zenith, she could have foreseen that dreary little postscript to her lurid life missive.

In the next issue of AINSLEE'S, Mr. Terhune will relate the story of "Adrienne Lecouvreur, the Actress Heart-Queen."





THE Atlantic seaboard, that "stern and rockbound coast" where our forefathers fought for existence with spade and hoe, is no longer a reach of straggling, struggling farms. It is still rockbound, but no longer stern. It may still shriek with gales in winter, but in summer it is the playground of the nation, alive with the earnest gayety of a hard-working people. Farms whose hundreds of acres were swapped for a trifle are jealously reckoned today by the square foot.

The Hotel Penzance, with its cottages, occupied some of the most precious of these feet. Its situation was indeed ideal. The rolling meadows behind it lent themselves perfectly to golf and tennis, and behind the meadows were pineclad hill and lowland where fine shell roads meandered, and woodland trails, not too difficult, lured the adventurous pedestrian. From the broad front verandas the prospect was still more varied. To right and left great bowlders breasted the sea, and immediately in front—a break in the rugged coast line—a beach of white sand sloped gently into the water.

And even this beach offered variety, for on part of it the long breakers thundered a challenge and an invitation, and on the rest the water, broken by a little group of wooded islands, rippled in peaceful calm, offering a more gentle place to bathe, and splendid anchorage to all sizes of craft. In the distance larger islands broke the horizon.

It is little wonder that the Penzance, splendidly equipped and fashionable from its opening, grew more and more a center of society with each succeeding season.

Alicia Hamilton, arriving with her mother and two maids, found it quite all she had expected. Indeed, although her purpose was fixed, and her courage high, she was secretly staggered at first by its stupendous combination of beauty and elegance. But she found reassurance in her new trunks, filled with new Paris clothes. She was sure, at least, that no woman in all that glittering throng would be more beautifully gowned than she; for she had spent two exacting months in Paris in preparation for her six weeks at the Hotel Penzance. She was going to make an experiment, and she was by nature thoroughgoing. She had even determined that, next to herself, her mother should be the best-dressed woman in the hotel.

And from the moment when she swept down the dining room in her mother's wake, that very first evening, her success was assured. Even the older set welcomed her; newer comers idolized her. If the Penzance had been Bath of Brummel's time, she would have been without dispute the toast of the town. Her position was *too* queenly; the porch gossips had decided definitely that there was not a man in the place who was worthy of her. They felt, with a sense of the discomfort of incompleteness, that they must

leave her, hung in air as it were, unmatched because of her very desirabilities; a glorious figure, romantically, pathetically alone. The whole hotel had a sense of expectation, as if, through sheer romantic justice, presently the prince was bound to arrive.

Every new arrival was scrutinized, as if he were stepping into a fairy story instead of a hotel, as if he might be hiding an extraordinary character under a commonplace exterior. It was, therefore, not so very extraordinary that, when Carter Brice swung down from the hotel bus, a murmur of universal recognition and satisfaction went up from the crowded verandas. That the portly Mr. Hungerford, millionaire proprietor of the Penzance, rushed halfway down the path to meet him and welcomed him with both hands, added not a little to the general gratified excitement. It was almost as if people actually said: "Here he is at last!" for this was certainly the general thought.

Carter Brice would have attracted notice anywhere. He was rather tall, and rather broad-shouldered, with the slim waist and thighs of an athlete, and with all an athlete's resilient confidence of carriage. Indeed, it was only his evident strength, his clear outdoor tan, and the proud, straightforward good humor of his blue eyes that saved him from a possible charge of dandyism. He was evidently one of those men who are particular about their clothes, and yet who are, at the same time, able to wear them without self-consciousness. As he came toward the hotel, arm in arm with Mr. Hungerford, even the rocking-chairs paused in their ceaseless oscillation. The Hotel Penzance felt that it was witnessing its second triumph of the summer.

Alicia Hamilton met him, as was almost inevitable, that very evening. There is a definite social magnetism that would have drawn them together, even if their affair had not been already settled by every gossip of the hotel. It was noticed that they danced often together, and that Alicia's color was unusually high.

And, as they had come together naturally on this first evening, so they found themselves companions, as a matter of course, through the succeeding days, sharing by universal consent the very innermost of the inner circles. They were asked inevitably to share in every social activity, and were so enthroned side by side that it would have been difficult for them to remain strangers.

Of the two, Miss Hamilton's activities were the more limited. Carter Brice seemed able and ready to do everything, from leading a cotillion to winning a tennis tournament or a diving contest, but her life was rather receptive and passive. She had little in common with the new race of amazons—the able, efficient, muscular young women of modern society—save her good looks and her good clothes. There was nothing of the invalid about her, no bodily fault or lack of force; her carriage really was queenly, and her step elastic and graceful. She watched sports with interest, but did not take part in them. She could sometimes be persuaded to walk, if the distance was not too great, and she danced whole evenings without a vestige of fatigue. Her life seem controlled less by her abilities than by her inclinations, and she appeared to be perfectly contented with the manner of life of the women of a generation ago, the old-fashioned, very feminine manner of living. She both talked well and listened well; she danced marvelously; she did little for herself, but expected, without disappointment, to have things done for her.

During this particular season, life at the Hotel Penzance turned more than ever to the water, for before the season had opened the fine casino had burned down, and time that in former years had been spent there had now to be passed in other ways.

Boating was more than ever in vogue, and the fleet in the hotel's sheltered waters grew to twice its old proportions. Picnics to one or another of a group of islands, a comfortable morning's sail away, became very popular. And it was on one of these that Brice

and Alicia Hamilton were given their first hours of secure isolation. Brice had no boat of his own, and rented for the day one of the small power craft belonging to the hotel. It was understood that he was to take Miss Hamilton and her mother, but at the last moment Mrs. Hamilton pleaded some indisposition, and sent her daughter off in Brice's care, unchaperoned.

The morning was a lovely one, the water smooth, and the rest of the fleet far ahead of them; but the hotel gossips would have been disappointed. Their intimacy had grown rapidly; they had become, many thought, rather more than good friends; and yet, with this most golden of opportunities, neither of them spoke a word that held, or hinted at, sentiment. Indeed, the only sign of the possible existence of anything more than friendship between them lay in their unusual silence. Their former conversations had been invariably animated and obviously of interest; now both seemed dumb in the grip of a common embarrassment.

Brice tinkered at his engine and scowled at the distant islands ahead of them. Alicia rested her cheek upon her hand, and sat for long moments with closed eyes, and for all Brice knew, she might have been sleeping. Once he asked her if she would like to take the wheel, but she only spread out her little white hands with a helpless gesture, and Brice set morosely to work flooding the engine bearings with oil. It was a moment of apparent relief to both of them when the trip was over, and their boat had nosed itself safely up to the pier, where the rest of the party were waiting for them with a kind of expectant indifference.

Their middle-aged host and hostess seemed to share the popular belief in the fitness of these two young people for each other, and had evidently determined upon a benign and definite interference, with all the transparent strategy of a comfortable couple fanning old romance with the furthering of some new one. This, they decreed, was to be a real woodland party, in which each one was to bear some share of

preparation. The guests were divided into groups, each group a separate "camp," in which every member had ordained duties to perform. Alicia and Carter were to be the cooks of theirs. Provisions had been provided in plenty, but most of them were uncooked. Each camp had its supplies and utensils dealt out to it, and its position allotted. Little rough, fireplaces of stone had already been built.

Brice laid their provisions, and their pots and pans in two heaps, where Alicia Hamilton could easily sort them, and went off with the rest of the men into the pine woods behind them to gather fuel. When he came back to throw down his double armful of fagots, he found his assistant sitting between the two heaps, curiously turning a skillet over in her hands.

Other fires about them had been started already. While Miss Hamilton watched him, Brice knelt down and laid their fire.

"I think the eggs are in that cardboard box," he said. "You might be making an omelet while I am getting the other things ready."

Supplies and paraphernalia had been dealt out with too lavish a hand; there was too much of everything. Brice found himself busy separating their necessities from the superabundance with which they had been provided. He was hard at work when the acrid smell of smoke brought him hastily to his feet. The fire that he had built was behaving perfectly, but the little skillet above it smoked to high heaven, while Alicia Hamilton stood clasping her hands in distress.

"What on earth is the matter?" Brice asked.

"I thought something was the matter," Alicia said, with a little laugh. "They shouldn't smoke as much as that, should they?"

"They?" Brice repeated. He snatched the smoking skillet from the fire. Dotted about its blackened interior where the charred remains of five eggs. "What on earth were you trying to do?"

He was surprised out of consciousness of any rudeness.

"I thought you told me to make an omelet."

Brice looked up at her in utter bewilderment. It seemed impossible that any girl could be so helpless, so utterly ignorant of the simplest piece of cooking. He had imagined that she would not be a finished cook, and had purposely given her something simple to do, but a child hardly would have dropped five eggs, unbeaten and unmixed, into an ungreased pan. He scarcely knew what to say—he was so mentally staggered that he found the situation embarrassing. Perhaps she was playing him some wild joke. He looked up at her, and saw her smooth brows puckered in a queer little expression of inquiry and distress; certainly here was nothing but an incredible innocence.

From other fires he could hear laughter, and the noisy confusion of the mistakes and small mishaps of other amateur cooks, but he could see at a glance that, in spite of all this, work was everywhere going forward, and that out of this frolic of inexperience somehow a really presentable meal would presently evolve. At this fireside of theirs it was plain that he would have to bear the greater proportion of their task, and he plunged into his preparations with an annoying sense of disappointment.

It was not that he minded the work, or any amount of it, but he had come in these last days to think of Alicia Hamilton as the one perfect woman. In short, he had fallen in with popular expectation, and had begun to find himself as much in love as everybody felt he should be; and it is natural for the young lover, be he ever so wise, to have a blind and infinite belief in the loved one's capabilities. He felt, now, not exactly disappointed, but disturbingly surprised.

He hurried about the work before him with a sort of defensive energy, unconsciously putting his own efficiency as a shield before Alicia's ignorance. Perhaps he was disturbed out of all proportion—other men would certainly

have thought so, for the old domestic virtues are less considered nowadays—but he really was seriously troubled. Alicia, after a few further blundering attempts to help him, had given up all pretense of work, and sat watching, with her white hands folded adorably in her lap. He got along much faster without her.

That, in the meal that followed, his efforts won much praise for their camp was cold comfort to him. He had enough presence of mind to remember that he was probably being closely watched, and so manfully paraded a fine gayety; no sudden gloom of his should give the gossips further food for discussion. But he felt a great thankfulness when it was all over, and they could once more start home again.

Often before in his life he had suspected fate of a sense of humor altogether in bad taste—now he was sure of it; for in the hurry of departure their hosts' yacht started off, leaving behind one of the great baskets, which it was his ill luck to have to carry. It was a monstrous affair, not to be hidden away in any locker of his small craft. It seemed to him that it fairly loomed up in his bow, an irritating, disproportionate reminder of something he was eager to see in diminished perspective. He kept his eyes steadily away from it.

He could not tell whether or not Alicia sensed his depression. Her silence of the morning was gone; she talked easily again, even, it seemed to him, with a new and surprisingly girlish gayety, a gayety to which he made his best response, and that gradually warmed him again; until even the great basket in the bows lost something of its satirical mockery.

In this confusion of emotions he paid but little attention to their course, and steered in the general direction of the Penzance without any particular thought of the way or the weather. It was not until a cold streamer of fog curled about them that he awoke to the fact that the Penzance was no longer visible. There was a space of glittering water before them, over which the fog

came rolling heavily for a moment, and then the space was gone, and they were engulfed in billowing mists, which blotted out the world as effectually as if they had suddenly been caught up into the dim circles of the infinite. Distant, unheeded sounds died faintly away, proclaiming their existence by their sudden cessation. Only the steady drumming of the motor came to them, a choked, small voice, still bravely asserting their advance.

Brice sprang up and peered vainly ahead for some remaining landmark.

Alicia laughed. "What is the matter?" she asked. "Didn't you see it coming?"

"No," Brice admitted, "I didn't. It seemed to creep upon us all of a sudden."

From where he stood he could see her only dimly, but again he heard her laugh.

"What *are* you laughing at?"

"At you," said Alicia. "That fog has been coming ever since we started back. I wondered if you saw it. Did my omelet upset you as much as all that?" So she had noticed, after all.

Brice laughed his denial, but even to his own ears his laughter held a rueful quality. He wished that if she had seen the fog, she had told him about it—but then probably she had no idea of its possible meaning to them.

"You're not frightened, are you?" he asked senselessly.

"Why, no, of course not. Are you?"

"That was a foolish question, wasn't it?" said Brice.

He spoke cheerfully, but he did feel a real uneasiness. He had never run so carelessly, and the fog had taken him so by surprise that he was far from positive even of their general direction. It is easy enough to get lost in the woods in the plain light of day, and it is infinitely easier to get lost in a boat in the blind grayness of a heavy fog. The least turn of the wheel in his careless hand in that first startled moment might be heading them already far from their course, and he knew that even men who have spent all their lives on the water may go astray without a com-

pass. Perhaps he ought to drop anchor and wait until the fog had been blown away; but he hated to frighten Alicia, or to admit any seriousness in the situation. He turned his head at a little noise and saw her behind him, very tall and dim in the fog.

She stretched out a hand and steadied herself with her finger tips on his shoulder, and then sank onto the seat beside him.

"I felt so far away and lonely 'way off there in the fog," she said, "and I wanted to tell you something. I know that you are anxious; I heard it in your voice in spite of you and the fog. No—please let me finish. I realize that you are nervous because I am along, and you are not quite certain where we are headed. I want to make a little confession. I am pretty well used to boats. I didn't say anything about it this morning because I don't think that anybody likes to be interfered with. And I am only telling you now because I want you to feel that you needn't worry about me; for I am not a bit afraid of the water. It isn't that I have anything to suggest, or that I don't trust you perfectly, you understand."

It was not the first time she had surprised him. More than once he had believed that he understood her, at least in a general way, and more than once she had shaken his sureness. But just now his relief was so great that his mind did not pause to digest this rather revolutionary idea of her. He simply accepted the statement.

"It's a relief to know that," he said. "I am perfectly free to admit that I am far from certain of our course. We may be points off of it, for all I know. I have been wondering if we shouldn't anchor, and wait for this thing to blow away, but I was afraid it would frighten you."

"I wondered if you were thinking about that, and I suppose the sensible thing would be to anchor. Just the same, I vote for keeping right ahead. There really isn't any particular reason for always being sensible. If you don't mind, I like the fun of the thing."

"Oh, you are adorable!" thought

Brice, and even the big basket bulking dimly near them no longer disturbed him. "Great!" he said aloud. "I don't see how we can come to any harm. Could you find that tin horn, do you suppose, and 'blow your shrieking' sirens to the deaf, gray-bearded seas'?"

They took turns blowing the horn and doing their trick at the wheel. The horn Brice found a nuisance. He knew the necessity of blowing it, for once or twice he caught the faint clamor of other horns, but without it he would have enjoyed the infolding quiet and isolation of the fog. Come what might, he had made up his mind to ask Alicia Hamilton to marry him.

Both of them had been listening for possible breakers, but beneath the fog the sea had settled to a flat calm, and at the very moment when land loomed up before them, they ran gently aground. Their boat had slipped softly enough onto the sand of a sheltered shore, but for all that, she proved presently hard and fast. The reverse propeller simply churned the water uselessly behind them; nor when Brice jumped overside, and labored in the shallow water with his shoulder to the bow did the boat so much as budge.

"At any rate," said Alicia cheerfully, "I don't see how we could have made a safer or pleasanter landing—nothing could have been more skillful. Let's take a line on shore, and wait for high tide."

Brice obediently held up his arms for her, and she swung easily into them, holding to him without embarrassment.

"I think I ought to tell you," he said, as he set her down at last upon the shore, "that the tide just now is on the ebb. I am afraid it will be a good many hours before we can get off. Perhaps we can walk back to the hotel from here, though."

"Even if we can't, we shan't starve to death. There must be enough for four or five people in that big basket." She seemed very little troubled.

They secured the boat, and started to grope their way along the shore. Once Alicia stumbled, and after that Brice took her hand and they went on so, for

perhaps twenty minutes. Then, both of them stumbled together, and Brice, putting down his hand, found that they had tripped over their own moorings. So they were on an island, and a very small one, without a house or any building upon it. Further investigation showed that their boat had run into a little cove. It was already nearly high and dry, and he was able to lift the basket down from the bows without stepping into the water. At last he was thankful for the basket. It would be eight or nine hours at least before they could get away.

Again, hand in hand, they made a circle of the island, and crossed it back and forth in careful, groping exploration. They found it a mere jut of rock and earth pushing up from the sea, steep-sided, except for the little shelving cove that chance—and perhaps some trick of current—had brought them into. It was heavily wooded with pine and cedar, which gave it in the fog a wildness of aspect altogether disproportionate to its size.

"I am so thankful there isn't a shed, or a cow, or anything," Alicia declared, when at last they sat down to rest, "for if you have to be cast away, it is so much nicer to have all the proper setting; and this truly is a desert island, even if it is only a pocket edition. I am quite convinced that, if we dug under that biggest tree back there on the little hill, we should find pirate gold. Certainly it has all the effect of a desert island. I have been thinking of starvation for the last half hour, and I am dreadfully hungry."

Brice laughed, and got up to unpack the basket.

"All right. I'll cook supper for you."

But when he had everything unpacked, and wood all gathered for a fire, Alicia decided that she was even more thirsty than hungry.

"There must be a spring somewhere," she said. "Couldn't you take that pail, and look for it while I start things? Every properly regulated island has a spring, and very often it is a purling one."

She was unable to see his face distinctly, but his whole attitude spoke hesitation.

"Please," she said. "I am sure that I could at least start the fire, and I truly am dreadfully thirsty."

There was nothing else for it, and although he went with reluctance, Brice picked up his pail, and blundered back into the island in search of a spring of very doubtful existence.

It was already growing a little darker, and he had to feel his way along. He was thirsty himself, and he was sure that Alicia must be, so that his conscience forced him to do his best, and make his search really minute; but he would have given much to have left his own thirst unsatisfied, and to have hurried back with his bucket still empty. For he doubted, with reason, Alicia's ability, and he was haunted by visions of her despair; a camp fire is not the easiest thing in the world to manage. Nevertheless, he forced himself on, and after a weary time did actually find a spring, and, with his bucket filled, started back in the general direction of the cove. Presently he caught sight of a dull-red blur of light; at least Alicia had managed to start her fire.

He groped his way into the circle of radiance and stood blinking, his eyes strained from his search in the thick twilight. As his sight came back, it was as if this fire gleam were the magician's premonitory flash in a fairy tale, for surely a miracle lay before him.

Close to the fire a white cloth was smoothly spread, and much the sort of supper that the jinni brought Aladdin was laid out upon it. The air was fragrant with the delicate enticement of the feast, and the aromatic magic of good coffee. He rubbed his eyes stupidly and looked at Alicia. Her face was flushed and happy, and a little frightened.

"So you found the water," she cried. "Hurry and sit down before everything is cold." Her voice was eager, but not altogether successfully unconscious.

"But," stammered Brice, "how—where—"

"Sit down," said Alicia, "and I'll tell you."

But she would not tell him until they had quite finished their supper, and replenished their fire, nor would she let him talk of anything remotely related to cooking. Then, when she had cleared the dishes away and repacked the basket, she sat down beside him.

"Now," she said, "I am ready to tell you all about it."

"And I have something to tell you," said Brice. "I am ready to listen, but I wanted to say that first."

Alicia blushed. "There isn't very much to tell," she said, "and I don't quite know how to tell it. It all, somehow, seems foolish, and scheming, and rather horrid."

"I have been pretty much alone ever since my father died, eight years ago. We had a big country place on Long Island, and part of the time I lived there, and part of the time in New York hotels, and the rest I have spent mostly in Europe, traveling about from one place to another. But it seemed to me that I was always lonely, and that the interesting world went wheeling on by me without a look. I have had all kinds of advantages, and have been taught to do lots of things—all the outdoor things that girls do nowadays, sailing, swimming, riding, golf, and tennis—the usual string of accomplishments. But what I like most of all is something that, since father's death, I never have seemed able to have—a home."

"Oh, I know that people laugh at what they call the domestic virtues, but my taste runs that way, and I don't seem able to help it. It took every bit of will power I had to keep my hands off that lovely basket of things to cook and to cook with on the picnic. You see, I made up my mind that my loneliness had been my own fault, and that perhaps it was because I did too many things, and was getting to be one of those horrid women people call 'capable'; and I decided that I would just see whether I was right or not. I went to Paris and got more clothes,

and came here determined to do nothing but butterfly—to dance, and talk, and watch. It has worked. Everybody has been lovely to me. And I am about heartbroken; for I don't think I can stand it much longer. I didn't want to be right; I only wanted to see."

A log fell, turning in the fire, spurted up a bright flame. To his astonishment, Brice saw that her eyes were full of tears. The fog was lifting now, but he took her hand, as he had taken it when they had groped their way about the island.

"It is a little comfort to know that you have been play acting, too," he said. "You must have guessed that I loved you—you must know now that I am going to ask you to marry me, but my masquerade has been so much more serious than yours that it needs confession, before I have any right to ask."

"I haven't posed here on purpose, but I fell into the position that I have had, and after I saw you that first night, I let things go, partly because I have been too happily excited to think, and partly because I have not dared confess. You see, I have been taken for a rich and idle young man, and I am neither rich nor idle. Mr. Hungerford welcomed me so because he likes me, and because it was part of his scheme that I should live at the Penzance long enough, and in the right sort of way, to get something of its atmosphere. I am his architect for the new casino. It is my first big job, and should mean a great deal to me."

"Of course I have good clothes; they are a part of my profession's necessary equipment. I thought this was going to be the gayest fortnight of my life. I suppose it would be hard for you to imagine what an outing like this can mean to a man who passes his time between a little box of an office and a three-room, uptown apartment—to a young architect, who has made only just enough for food, and rent, and clothes. Prospects are all very well, but a little tangible gayety is not to be scoffed at."

"Then I saw you, Alicia Hamilton, and I began trying to imagine my prospects tremendous. Sometimes I have thought that you liked me, and imagined that you might be willing to wait until I had something better to offer you. And then I felt how hard the wait would be for me, and dared dream that you might take me as I am—little three-room apartment and all—if you could be persuaded to love me. I knew that I could persuade you that your money had nothing to do with it; and I hoped that you might think it would be fun to have a little place all of your own to play with. That was why the picnic was such a knock-down blow to me. You would have to cook, you know—just a little, and only for a little while I hope—but I couldn't see you happy in it."

"Happy!" Alicia repeated excitedly. "I should simply adore it! I made up my mind days ago to marry you, if you asked me, Carter—I even meant to make you ask me if I could—but all along I have had a horrible fear that you might want to take me to some place full of butlers and kitchen maids. Women's minds race ahead, I suppose; I had our vacations all planned out. We were to go camping all alone, and for a little while, at least, get away from all those terrible servants." She was close in his arms now with her face turned up to his.

Neither of them knew when the fog lifted; there had been so much and such great things to tell each other. But when Brice looked at his watch, it was two o'clock, and a full moon was shining down upon them. Their boat lay afloat on the brimming tide.

"I suppose we must go," Brice said regretfully. "They must be anxious about you." He stood up reluctantly, and looked about him at this little treasure island of theirs. Behind him, through the trees, lights glimmered. "What on earth are those?" he asked, pointing.

Alicia laughed openly. "Those, Carter dear, are the lights of the Hotel Penzance. There was a little rift in the fog when we first got here, and I

saw them then. I was terribly afraid that you would see them too, or hear some noise from the hotel, when you went to look for water, but it was a risk I had to take, for I was simply bound to cook that supper. You see, I am a very false young woman, Carter."

Brice looked up from untying the small hawser. "You haven't told me yet, Alicia, how soon you will marry me."

"If we should run down with our boat to Pendleton," said Alicia, "we could catch that early-morning local to New York. I don't know what you

will think of me, Carter, but I do so want to see that apartment."

"Alicia, you couldn't—you wouldn't — But, oh, if you only would!"

"I would and I could, dear. Do you want to see all those people at the Penzance again?"

"What?" said Brice, his conscience calling to him. "How about your mother? She must be pretty well frightened already."

Alicia hid her face on his shoulder. "I don't think so," she murmured. "We can telegraph her. You see, she isn't as anxious as most mothers. I only hired her for the season."



COMPENSATIONS

FREE is the winter's wind;
 Carefree and unconfined,
 Bravely it blows.
 But yet it seemeth meet
 There should with it compete
 All the young fragrance sweet
 Chained to a rose!

Glad is the ocean's life—
 Even through storm and strife
 Unseamed with scars.
 But on the pond's calm breast
 Lilies do sweetly rest,
 And, each a shining guest,
 Myriads of stars!

Yonder the village spires
 Glow in the sunset fires
 Like burnished gold.
 But yet a candle's beam
 May the more lovely seem
 When it a happy dream
 Of home doth hold!

ANTOINETTE DECOURSEY PATTERSON.



FETISH

Charles Saxby

THE night had shut down like the lid of a box, bringing with it the land heat and a monotonous downpour of rain. Every light above decks had been extinguished, and even the breeze of their progress had failed as the steamer crawled along at quarter speed, feeling her way through the thick darkness. For an hour the two men had lain in their chairs under the awnings, silently waiting for some relief; then Hale stirred wearily.

"Africa is taking a farewell twist at our necks," he ventured, as if merely trying speech to see if it were more bearable than silence. "Whereabouts are we, anyhow?"

"Trying to pick up Cape Palmas," replied the faint glimmer of clothes that was Festen, his voice sounding startlingly disembodied in the absence of any visible figure. "That is why we have slowed down so."

The tip of Hale's cigar showed that he nodded. "The captain is an old hand; he knows too much to fool with the West Coast."

"It's a pity that every white man out here doesn't know enough for that," the voice came back.

"Eh?" Hale had lost the connection in trying to remember what he had heard of that unseen other, so close to him. "Enough for what?"

"Not to fool with Africa."

"Oh!" Behind it came the recollection: Of course, Festen—"Roads and Forests"—some sort of a big bug in the ethnological survey line. "Oh, you

can't stop them. Drink and women—that's all most of them know."

"That is just fooling with themselves. I was thinking of other things."

"O-h!" This time there was understanding behind Hale's tone. "Why? Anything special?"

The moment they stopped speaking their words were gone, as if smeared off a black slate by the pressure of a hot thumb. It was, perhaps, that impression of instantaneous finality that prompted Festen to speak.

"Rather special, and rather with me just now, since most of it—my share of it—happened last night. Do you know Willoughby?"

"Willoughby—" And Hale's tones hesitated. "The D. C. at Grand Jack? Was that he who came out in the surf-boat with you this morning? Tall chap with light hair—looked as if he'd had fever."

"That was he—but it wasn't fever. No, it wasn't fever," Festen repeated, a moment later, ignoring Hale's failure to give him a lead; "nor drink, nor any of the usuals. Willoughby isn't that sort—rather too much not that sort. A little dissipation serves to keep a youngster balanced, while he— Do you know Grand Jack?" he concluded abruptly, and there came a fretful reply of, "Me? Lord, no! Accrome is bad enough."

"It is the usual thing," Festen's voice went on, almost with a note of apology for the wearisomely familiar description; "surf, sand beach, and rotten lagoon, with a stenchful muddle of a

native town mixed up with all three. Also a castle—seventeenth century Dutch; a great, six-sided affair, with walls fifty feet high. The D. C.'s quarters are in a modern bungalow built on the highest ramparts."

"Lovely!" yawned Hale. "Fifty feet of steps to climb."

"Seventy, from the beach. The castle stands on some rocks right in the surf. Remember those steps. It was as I went up them, two days ago, that I first met Arkah Mensah."

"Arkah Mensah?" Hale's acquiescence of listening gave way to a flash of interest. "Do you mean the Paramount of Gedia?"

"Yes. Why? Know anything?"

"Only in connection with that Adansi tribal jewel palaver."

"Tribal jewels?" Festen prompted.

"Yes. The government is going to settle it at last. Old Arkah Mensah has been claiming them for ten years; Willoughby must have his instructions to sift the claim by now."

"Are they valuable?"

"Not particularly; but their possession gives prestige. They are by way of being 'fetish.'"

"Ah!" The glow of Festen's cigar brightened as he pulled at it in concentration. "That is illuminating; it supplies a motive—a *present* motive. No nigger, no matter who he is, can look ahead very far. Chief Arkah Mensah will bear watching! I remember thinking so as I met him on the steps that afternoon. An impressive old chap, wrapped in a dark-blue cloth with silver fringe, and carrying a gold-headed staff.

"He came clip-clopping slowly down in wooden sandals, and the instant I saw his fine, melancholy, wrinkled face—something like that of a chocolate-colored bloodhound—I liked him. There was a remarkable magnetism about him, a dignity that made it a compliment when he swept off his black sombrero and bowed. He did not speak or stop—merely bowed and passed; but I had an impression of a wonderful kindness.

"Of course, I knew all that was back

of it—all the ridiculous intrigues of a 'king's house'; all the mess of women and dirt and nigger litter; all the scratching, the senseless, loud-mouthed yap-yapping of a moonlit night; all the—the rest of it. But I liked him—and I distrusted him, too. He was too fine not to be dangerous; he was the sort that must be either taken right in or else treated with the strictest injustice. Had I been the district commissioner at Grand Jack, within a week Chief Arkah Mensah would have been going, in fear of a jail sentence, to Cape Coast—and if I could not have found a charge against him, I would have manufactured one.

"All this was before I even saw Willoughby. Willoughby—" The word sounded as if Festen were rolling it on his tongue as if some physical taste might help him to a description. "What shall I say of him? All I can say will be merely my own view of him. I sometimes wonder which is the real 'us'—as we seem to ourselves, or as we seem to others? But then he told me much, and I saw more. Some of it I saw in the first moment of meeting; and even as we shook hands, I was groaning to myself, 'Oh, Lord—here's another to be hauled through!'

"You thought, this morning, that he had a fever. Two days ago he looked as if he were dying of it as he dragged himself to meet me. But his hand was cool and moist, and I saw him flush as he caught my involuntary glance of suspicion at the sideboard. But it wasn't that, either; there were no dirty glasses about, no sloppy rings on the table. There were letters there, though—home letters, too—and all of them unopened. From that I saw that, whatever it was, it was serious.

"I have about given up trying to play dry nurse to fool youngsters. As you said, one can't stop them, and there never seems any particular reason why one should. But Willoughby is different from the usual beefy young ass, whining about 'being in a hole' and squirting remorseful morality born of fright. He is valuable timber, for he goes beyond. In fact, that is his trou-

ble; that very 'going beyond' brings some queer liabilities with it. I don't mean that I saw all this at once; you must remember that I was two days with him, and one hour of it in a ghastly sort of intimacy. The kind of hour that gets you absolutely through with a fellow, for once it is over, he can never forgive you for knowing so much.

"Most of what came before that hour was simply conjecture. He was the first white man I had seen for three months; then again, he has the faculty of arousing one's interest. Interest, but not any special degree of affection; he is too rigid for that, too intensely self-centered.

"It was that rigidity that was the most marked thing about him as he went through the motions of a host—a rigidity of concealment. He had noted my glance of suspicion as we first met, and from that moment he was holding a mask before his face.

"At first, from the unopened letters, I wondered if he were not merely badlyhipped over some trouble at home. But, as I sat opposite him at dinner, I saw that the trouble was intensely present, and I wondered what Grand Jack could possibly contain to put such torment into a man's eyes. To me, after my six months in the bush, it seemed a commonplace, frowsy mess of emasculate barbarism and the tag ends of civilization, in which the virtues of both were utterly lost—niggers and tin cans both seem to deteriorate so when mixed.

"It was not until past midnight that I caught a hint that there might be things beneath that unpleasant surface. I had gone to bed early, but the pounding of the surf got into my dreams, and at last an unusually heavy breaker woke me, and I got up and went out on the ramparts.

"A sliver of moon was setting behind the coconut palms; below me a well of darkness and the glimmer of the lamp at the gate showed the courtyard. All else was lost in a low, silver fog that drifted in over the beach, and somewhere down on the rocks was an oyster fisher, singing the fishing song."

Festen hesitated, then hummed, under his breath, and in queer, wailing minors:

"Menni, menni, takka fa-an,"

while Hale, as if caught involuntarily in the swing of it, joined in:

*"Ah brinnie, poona croom
Ah brinnie, poona—"*

Then he stopped, with a suddenness that showed that he had caught himself, and Festen gave a short laugh of understanding.

"We are both of us old coasters, and our blood is stung with the drug. I have heard men, all unconsciously, hum that song between the acts at a London theater. I had heard it a thousand times before; but, as I stood there that night, it got under my skin, raising it up in cold goose flesh. It made me see things. I could see that nigger, black and naked, creeping among those rocks, singing as he went. I wondered why—why was he black and naked—why did he sing?

"A trivial tune, with untranslatable words; but there is more sheer 'why' in it than in any other I ever heard. All of Africa seemed in it, too. I could feel the ache of her immense, useless distances; her longing to be let alone; the pain of that hopeless, accusing question she turns upon her conquerors. I could feel Grand Jack himself—could detect, in its secret atmosphere, little undercurrents of a deadly, veiled antagonism to us. I have felt such places before—one knows them the instant one sets foot in them; places that are 'nigger sour'; places that have never submitted, that will strike at us, to the end of time, in any invisible way they can.

"And with it all came a recollection of the old chief going down the steps that afternoon, with his fine, melancholy face; too fine—too kind—too subtle.

"There was a light shining out from the dining-room arches, and I went over and looked in. Willoughby was sitting there at the table, those unopened letters at his elbow, his chin on his hands. He was staring straight at me, but he did not see me; he did not

see anything. All he was doing was listen. He was simply an embodied audience, the sweat dripping from his forehead; and I felt my own ears flap forward and strain in the effort to catch what was beyond their power to hear.

"Then I thought that perhaps he was listening *for* something, and I imagined I understood, when, from the steps leading to the beach, I caught the slow, steady clip-clop of a pair of wooden sandals. My first suspicion was of some woman palaver, but a glance at Willoughby's face swept that away. He was tragedy incarnate—the black, hopeless tragedy of youth; and not even the most romantic young fool could concoct a tragedy over a grinning, splay-footed Ahanta wench.

"The footsteps were lost in the tunnel of the gateway, then emerged again, echoing and distinct, into the courtyard below; nor was there any challenge from the sentry. There was a faint shuffle and scrape, the slight click of falling wood, as the wearer slipped the sandals off. Then silence—but I could almost see some one coming up the inside steps in bare feet, coming unhurriedly, steadily—even relentlessly.

"I went softly back to my room. I did not wish, just then, to be caught spying on my host; the situation did not strike me as being ripe enough. I did not even glance out through the jalousies to see who it was that passed on the ramparts. There was no need to—I knew that it was old Arkah Mensah. I knew, too, from the sureness of his approach, that it was not the first time he had come at that hour.

"I could see him—that night, and who knows how many nights before it—appearing suddenly in the light from the arches, his fine, slightly bleared old eyes shining with a wonderful sympathy. And back of him that human warren of a 'king's house,' with its swarm of women and dependents, its mixture of half-savage luxury and utter squalor, its atmosphere of fallen power and sullen intrigue. And back of all that, Africa, craving only to be let alone.

"The old chief paid his call upon me

the next afternoon—and sized me up. I was surprised at his age; he remembered the slave wars of sixty-five years ago. He had been 'too young boy' at that time, he said. He had done 'bad things' in his youth, but was now 'baptis' and he beamed and called me 'brother'—once. Then he became remote, melancholy, gazing at me in a way that made me feel as if I had never before been properly appreciated; and he massaged a sprain in my wrist so that the stiffness left it in five minutes. His fingers were as soothing as an opiate.

"He accepted a box of cigars, after a keen glance at the label, took a drink, and drifted off, leaving me with the comfortable conviction that I had been entirely too clever for him. All through it he had handed out moral maxims unblinkingly, though he must have known that I knew.

"My Kru boys had been a night in Grand Jack, and, as usual, my personal boy brought me the town gossip with my coffee. He had a new charm done up in a crow quill that was stuck through his ear. He told me, with an ecstatic grin, that it was to hurry the death of his father, who was lingering overlong in possession of the family goats. It had been obtained in exchange for two months' pay, from Chief Arkah Mensah, who was 'big, big *ju-ju* man,' with a reputation extending even to Setta Kru.

"Willoughby was the same all day, gray-lipped, courteous, silent; his face a sort of paper white that made his eyes look dark by contrast. I avoided him as much as I could, for I knew that, if the thing came at all, it would be at night. These things always do come at night, somehow. Even at home, where one is defended against it by all possible means, the night is apt to act like a psychologic pump. But out here, where at night there is nothing but night—good heavens, the way one will turn to even the sorriest specimen of one's own race for some spot of mutual comprehension!

"But Willoughby had no intention of doing anything of the sort if he could possibly help it, though I could see the

screws of his depression being tightened on him from hour to hour. After dark he hung about the lamp, as if afraid to venture out of reach of its rays. He pretended to read, but in reality he was listening; listening for something, as yet; I suspected that the listening to it came later, about the time I had seen him the previous night, and I wondered if Arkah Mensah came regularly at that hour. I meant to find out, for if there was anything amiss in Grand Jack, it was my business to know it.

"I went to my room and lit my lamp and opened a shutter. My windows were in plain view from the town, and if any one was watching, they could not fail to see my light. After a while I put it out again and sat down to watch.

"I must have dozed off, for the next thing I was on my feet and creeping instinctively toward the dining room. Willoughby was there, standing at the table, his back to me, and once more I caught the sound that had aroused me—the unmistakable click of a revolver hammer."

Festen paused, and, with the silence, the heat and darkness seemed to close in on them more thickly than ever; so thickly that his last words appeared to hang over them, caught in a black mesh, with a hint of impending tragedy. Then Festen laughed, with an amusement that was plainly for himself.

"I shall have more sympathy for melodrama after this. People *do* do such things, after all. I must have jumped, for the next thing I knew I was jammed up against Willoughby's back, my hands round in front of him, grasping his wrists; and the revolver clattered down on the table as I wrenched them apart.

"'You damned young ass——' I began; then stopped—stopped rather foolishly.

"His wrists were limp in my grasp, and he turned his head, his face about two inches from my own.

"'All right, old chap,' he drawled. 'Continued in our next issue—eh?'

"The young puppy—I could have kicked him! All the more so because

I had detected an instant of yielding before his muscles flattened in the stubbornness of a passive resistance. It was only his pride that was keeping him silent, but he had effectually squashed the situation, and all I could do was to drop his wrists and move away. That was pride, too; there we were, both wanting the same thing, he to speak and I to hear, but each afraid of what the other might think.

"'This is a queer time to be fooling with a revolver,' I began.

"'When is the time to fool with one?' he retorted. 'As a matter of fact, I was unloading it.'

"There were no cartridges on the table, the gun was empty, and he opened his hand, showing the shells he had just extracted.

"'I thought you had gone to bed,' he went on, with a glance at my clothes. 'Oh, you needn't explain—I know you have been watching me.'

"'I have the right to do so,' I said. 'I am an officer of this government, of superior rank to your own, and——'

"'I represent the government here ——' he commenced hotly, but I cut him short.

"'Exactly. And the question is—are you representing it in a fitting manner?'

"That hit him, threw him back on—whatever it was. But even so, he was not going to speak if he could help it. Yet he wanted to, and he was beginning to realize it. I could see the urge for speech in his eyes, as if the hour, his need, the loneliness were all sapping the will that kept him silent.

"'What is your charge against me?' he demanded.

"'That it is not fitting, nor conducive to good order, that Chief Arkah Mensah should have unchallenged entry to this castle at night.'

"He sat down at that slowly, and merely because his knees would no longer support him; but, as he did so, I knew that I had him. Men rarely make confidences while on their feet. I hesitated whether to try another long shot, or to put a hand on his shoulder

and pull out the *vox humana* stop. But he saved me the trouble.

"Well—what is it that you are so damned anxious to know?" he asked.

"What it is that you are listening to all the time."

"His hands began to work nervously, but he wasn't done yet. Even that private inferno in which he seemed so bottled up hadn't changed his fiber. He might break, but he wouldn't disintegrate; there was no jelling down about him. It was about then that I began to feel I must pull him through for his own sake; one has to respect a chap who refuses even to come out of hell except on his own terms.

"Are you asking as a government officer," he said, "or—as my guest?"

"Bread and salt," I answered. "Shake hands on it."

"He broke at that; he was already feeling the relief that comes from even the decision to speak, that curious mental salve of confession. He looked up at me for a moment, then burst out, in a fit of irritation:

"Oh—for God's sake sit down! Don't stand there looking so absurdly virtuous—I beg your pardon—I didn't mean—"

"Then he put his head on the table and went to pieces.

"I let him alone for a couple of minutes, poured him a drink, and brought it to him. He choked some of it down, pulled himself into some sort of shape again, lit a cigarette, and—then came the sticking point; you probably know—that moment that seems impossible to get over. We both felt foolish as we sat there looking at each other.

"I don't know where to begin—how does one begin a thing like this?" he said at last. And to my, "Why not at the beginning?" he threw out his hands.

"Where is it—the beginning? I suppose it is really because I am the sort of chap I am, but where did that begin? Where did I get this insistent, tormenting desire to know?"

"That was it—he wanted to know. As I said, he went beyond; he simply could not be satisfied, as are most of us, to run round and round in a men-

tal rat trap. The things outside were calling to him; they always had done so, and how much more when he touched Africa! There was in him the need of mystery, and he had grasped the fact that mystery was all about him beneath the veil of the commonplace. What were these strange potentialities called negroes? What was their real life; what was hidden behind those half-brutish faces; what were their beliefs; and what reality, if any, lay behind those beliefs?"

"A-h!" The exclamation was Hale's, and it finished with a muttered: "The young ass!"

"Possibly," returned Festen dryly. "But then you must remember he was alone down there in Grand Jack. Alone—that is the word of which you big-wigs in Accrome have no conception.

"Eighteen months of it, mostly alone, driving his mind against that sense of mystery! And out of it he had brought the perception that people are ruled by whatever they happen to believe in. Religions—gods or devils—country—family—science, of whatever sort—public opinion—by whatever they happen to absolutely believe are they ruled.

"He told me how there had flashed upon him a sentence from the Testament: 'He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.' Those words had haunted him; he had brooded upon them until he saw people wandering this extraordinary world, each cased absolutely in his own viewpoint, sticking as closely as possible to those whose viewpoints most closely coincided with their own, utterly uncomprehending that there might be other ways of looking at things.

"And Willoughby, sitting there on the ramparts amidst all that suction of solitude and darkness, gazing out over a sleeping world, weaving his queer half insights into a glittering fabric of dreams—if one but could, without being deluded oneself, grasp and manipulate those beliefs of others—Oh, he has the mind of an administrator; he saw that if one could only rule what rules people—do you see? And he had heard vague hints, mostly exaggerated,

of the great secret societies that honeycomb west Africa—of the Senoussi, of the Red Empire of the Fullahs, of the mysteries of fetish.

"He dreamed, I verily believe, of penetrating the societies, of dominating their counsels until he was the head of a great underground empire that bent all west Africa to his will. As he talked, in short, jerky sentences, I could catch his picture of himself—erect, pallidly arrogant, standing under a vague canopy amidst all the glare and color and heat that is Africa by day. And back of him—how shall I describe it, that dream of his?—hints of vast expanses of red sands under an empty sky; of the clamor of mysterious, mud-walled towns beyond the Tchad, alive with trade, of caravans pouring a stream of wealth down to Lagos and Cape Coast—rare plumes, carpets, and gold, grains and jewels and gouts of amber gum; of fleets of silent canoes on yellow, sun-dazzled rivers, laden with palm oil and rubber; arms and ammunition, the gathering of the emirs with drums and banners; naked chiefs prostrating themselves; lone runners bearing his word to lands buried beneath an avalanche of vegetation.

"Dreams, of course—dreams, all. But provided he can stand the terrific squeeze of that moment when his dreams begin to emerge into the concrete, your dreamer of to-day is the creator of to-morrow.

"To begin—that was his problem. The material gearing of his mind is too acute, too practical, to allow even a dream to slide over it without being caught in the teeth of action, and the impatience of his youth would have no delay. It was there that Arkah Mensah came in, at that point of ensoubling those dreams. In him, a priest of fetish, Willoughby thought he saw his chance. He began to cultivate him, to send for him in the evenings.

"You can imagine those interviews—imagine the old chief clip-clopping up those steps with that hint of purpose beneath the steady sureness of his approach; imagine him sitting there, with his subtle magnetism, his sapping, en-

veloping approval—and back of him seventy years of African intrigue. And Willoughby, all impetuous fire and clumsy, boyish finesse, drawing the old man on, delighted to find it all so easy, as he enmeshed himself, in his turn, in the web of what he believed himself to be accomplishing.

"At last the old chief, artfully entrapped, brilliantly outgeneraled, secretly—that is, obviously secretly—anxious to please this wonderful young white man—Oh, can't you see it? I could. To me it was like looking at a drama in a mirror, like seeing it from the back of the mirror, where were hidden all the things that did not come to reflection.

"Arkah Mensah at last consented that Willoughby should witness an initiation. There was a little matter of ten pounds, for expenses, and Willoughby handed it over with a covert grin at the old man's transparent, childish greed. There were countless instructions as to his conduct; he was to fast all the previous day, for instance, and you can imagine those hours of increasing excitement on an empty stomach. He was to wear certain charms, to repeat certain words; all utter foolishness—meant as such, I believe—that made Willoughby feel like a young god playing with children.

"They went alone, he and the chief, creeping through the town, which, at that hour, should have been sleeping, but had its eyes upon them. He could feel them, he said—unseen eyes, black, opaque, set in yellowed eyeballs, that peered at them through the wattled walls. And once a woman, back in the shadows of a hut, laughed as they passed—a laugh with a jeer in it.

"They crossed the lagoon in a canoe. He described it to me—the old man, half nude, decked with feathers and nuggets, chanting as he paddled; the reflection of the stars in the black water; the dew-drenched reeds that clutched at them as they brushed by; the bubbles of gas from the rotting mud underneath; then the glow of fires, the shouts of the men and women—"

"Women?" exclaimed Hale.

"So he described it." Festen's tone was noncommittal. "He could never find the place again, but it was somewhere on the fringes of the bush. His first impression was trees—'those damned trees,' he called them. 'You couldn't breathe,' he said, 'the air was so thick with them, all the branches seeming to come alive and writhe, like snakes, in the shifting light of the fire.'"

"They stripped him of his white man's togs, wrapped a native cloth about his loins, and sat him down in the center. As he said, 'I never felt so naked in my life. It was as if they had taken a skin from me, leaving every nerve bare.'"

"It was his first glimpse of Africa with the lid off; he could hardly tell what was going on, but it seems to have been fairly barbaric. They had made him drink some trade gin, and the fumes of it, the shouts, the throb of the tom-toms, the sudden spurts of the fire, the ensuing gloom as it died down again, all confused him. All he could remember was a sort of clamant nightmare of shouting, leaping silhouettes amidst a suffocating tangle of writhing branches.

"He was not to speak—that was the unbreakable condition—and Arkah Mensah had warned him that every effort would be made to cause him to utter some sound. The glowing ends of torches were thrust within an inch of his flesh; he felt the prick of knives on his bare back; cutlasses whizzed round his head. Then, toward the end, a woman came forward on her knees—a big, sooty creature; he remembered how the fat muscles of her thighs quivered and flopped as she jerked herself forward. In her arms was a baby, a wretched atom of perhaps five weeks, too feeble even to bawl. All it could emit was a little, moaning wail with a croupy choke in the middle of it.

"What was to happen, he could not imagine, but it was plain that some crucial test was to be administered. The niggers were all silent now, the tom-toms softened to a faint thrumming, like a pulse beating in the back of his brain, and, wherever he looked, he met

eyes staring at him in concentrated, ignorant curiosity.

"The woman fell prostrate at his feet, holding up the baby. From behind, Arkah Mensah bent down and whispered to him to take it; so he stretched out his hands, and the woman laid it on them, a squirming, unwholesome little thing, soft as a slug, wailing up at him from a puckered, black face. He had no idea what to do with it; he was faint and dizzy; and when Arkah Mensah whispered, 'Brinnie—do you give it me?' he nodded, anxious only to be rid of it.

"He caught the gleam of a knife in the old man's hand and almost cried out, but the chief turned on him an entreating, reproachful glance, and he saw that this was simply another attempt to make him speak. He wanted it over, to get away; he had suddenly seen that the way to rule people in a mud hole is not to get in and wallow with them. He felt dirty, defiled; his whole soul was longing for a bath and clothes, and the thousand-and-one reminders of civilization.

"There was a yell from the negroes, the flash of the knife. But Willoughby knew that it was merely a test; he could have sworn that the knife stopped in time. The woman sprang up with a scream, snatched the baby, and ran away into the shadows. The fire was suddenly scattered, and there was an impression of flight on every side. He was alone again with Arkah Mensah. It was all over."

"But——" And Hale's voice came with a note of excitement in it. "Look here—that was not a genuine initiation! I mean—I——"

Then his voice died away again in some confusion, and Festen laughed.

"All right—I'll admit that I knew as much as that myself. It was not, nor was it meant to be; Arkah Mensah had no intention of really letting Willoughby in.

"A week, ten days, went by without his seeing the chief again. The whole affair had taken its place in his mind as a mere mistake that was over and done with. Then, one night, he found,

lying on his table, a little bundle tied up in grass cloth. How it came there no one seemed to know, and, at the very first sight of it, he hated it. Its mysterious appearance, the sullen silence, under question, of the sentries and servants, showed him that there was some one in Grand Jack who could wield a greater authority than his own, even inside the castle itself.

"He felt an inexplicable distaste for opening it—yet he wanted to—knew that he would, and—at last—he did.

"There are some things that one can open and close again; then again there are some things that, once opened, are opened once and for all. Willoughby knew that that bundle was one of those—but he opened it. Of course, he would; Arkah Mensah knew that. He had gone to bed—deliberately—but he as deliberately got up again to do it. I could see it—the room, with its hideous government blue paint, the flickering candle, the night pressing in through the arches, and Willoughby, white as his pajamas, fumbling desperately with the knots of grass twine.

"That was as far as he would go with speech; as far as he could go, I believe. He was near his limit when he dragged himself into his bedroom. I heard the click of two locks and he came back, carrying the bundle, on his face a loathing like that of a man chained to a corpse. He dropped it on the table, then turned away to the wall for support, shielding his face with his arms as I threw back the wrappings. There, like a little puckered, blackened coconut, was the smoke-dried head of a nigger baby.

"I began to understand as I looked down at that piteous little head. I understood Willoughby himself as he first saw it, and I turned cold with him, felt the snap of his tense young mind as it made an instant connection with the miserable little squirmers of that night of the initiation. When dreams start to come true, they are apt to bring so many things that one hasn't dreamed of. When he saw that the real task of the administrator is not to trouble with the beliefs of the masses, but to rule

those who are already ruling them, he forgot that perhaps others knew that, too. Arkah Mensah, for instance, had sucked that in with his mother's milk back in some dark hole of the ramshackle old 'king's house.' I couldn't blame him for using his knowledge; it was all just a part of that long, hopeless African night—a bubble on the death froth of a continent.

"Then I looked at Willoughby, and my philosophy went to rags before the strange magic of race. Throwing one end of the cloth over the head, I grasped his shoulders.

"'Well?' I demanded. 'You saw the head—what then?'

"'I have never looked at it since,' he said, still keeping his face hidden. 'But I feel it, and—especially at night—I hear it. I can feel that wretched little naked body squirming on my hands—' He whirled round on me, flinging me off. 'Look here—I'm not sorry. I ought to be, perhaps—but I'm not; understand that. I hated the thing while it was alive there in my hands—it was like some fat, fungus thing—it wasn't wholesome. But—all the same—don't you see—'

"'Oh, yes, I saw—but—all the same—' And it was exactly that that Arkah Mensah, with his accumulated knowledge of the curious ways of white men, had counted upon. And Willoughby had actually handed him the thing, had paid him those ten pounds for 'expenses.'

"'You hear it?' I asked.

"'All the time, now. At first it was only at night, but now it comes by day as well. I hear it while holding court, while hunting, or out on inspection. And when I don't hear it, it is just as bad, for I never know when the thing may not start up. It is like a maggot eating into my brain—a maggot of sound—soft—irresistible—that little, whimpering, croupy choke—a beastly sound!'

"His knees gave way, and he lurched forward, with his hands outstretched for help—the first time he had asked it. 'I'm hearing it now!' he cried. 'Man,

for the love of God, stop it—do something—send for Arkah Mensah!

"Why send for him?" I asked, as I shoved him down into a chair.

"He stops it for me. He comes and places his hands on my head, and it stops, and I get some sleep. He is the only one who can do anything."

"What was I to do? To deliver the old chief to 'justice' was simply to ruin Willoughby, and we need Willoughbys; need him, as he is going to be, for the administry of our own special fetish of dominion. Then, again, there was no actual proof that this was the same baby, or, even so, that it had not really died a natural death. Willoughby himself needed no proof at all; all he needs is the idea, and what he needed just then was to have the idea amputated from his mind.

"I uncovered the head again, and took it up and examined it closely; then I exclaimed in surprise. I knew that Willoughby looked up, asked a question, but I was too excited to notice. There was a surveyor's measure lying on the table, and I grabbed it and began measuring the head, the frontal development of the skull, the length of jaw, jotting down computations on the back of an envelope. I sat down to it, tremendously excited, for I was astride my hobby as I made incisions, studied the teeth, skin texture, and pigmentation.

"He was watching me breathlessly, when I looked up at last. What I was doing he had no idea, but I was at least doing something. There was a gleam of hope in his eyes, a desperate gleam that I could not have disappointed in any case, but there was no need to.

"I laughed as I laid the head down again, with an elaborate carelessness, and lit a cigarette.

"That woman—the mother—was she an Ahanta?" I asked, and he nodded with the same deliberate silence.

"Then you can fire that head back at old Arkah Mensah as soon as you like," I went on. "He is clever, but not quite clever enough. That is the head of a Dahoman baby, and—what is

more—it has been dead for several years at least."

"He wiped the sweat from his forehead, and his chest heaved with an intake of breath like that of a diver coming to the surface.

"But—the voice?" he croaked.

"My dear chap," I said, in an irritatingly superior tone, "did you stop to think that the man who can stop the sound of a nonexistent voice in your ears could probably also produce it—if he wanted to?"

"You mean?"

"I mean this: that, if you knew anything at all about fetish, which you evidently don't, you would understand that most of its genuine priests are skilled hypnotists."

"I had smoothed my face into a sort of half-contemptuous reassurance, and, as he stood there, searching me with a blazing, silent question, all he saw was sheer impatience at his stupidity. Then he turned and went out on the ramparts—to have it out, I suppose.

"I tied up the repulsive little bundle again, went to my room, scrubbed my hands, and drenched them with eau de Cologne. I could hardly wait to pour the water into the bowl, my fingers felt so defiled; that head was the most piteously ghastly thing I had ever touched. After a while Willoughby came in again, tauter than ever, his mouth just a thin gash above his chin. That fellow never heard of the verb 'to let down.' He did not speak, but took up the revolver and began loading it.

"What are you going to do?" I asked.

"Nothing desperate, so don't be alarmed," he said, looking at me as cool as be-damned. "I should never blow my brains out by day, but for the last six weeks I have been unloading this at night. There is no need for that now—thanks to you."

"That was all I got, all I ever shall get, and perhaps that knowledge showed in my tones as I said politely: 'Don't mention it.'"

"He snapped to the breech, patted it, laid the thing away in a drawer, and

then looked at me again. 'Well—what do you expect me to do?' he asked. 'I have said "thank you," and I mean it.' Then he took a letter from the pile on the table and began opening it.

"It was all over, and I felt as if I were facing an utter stranger, and so I was. I was seeing him as he had been before Arkah Mensah meddled with his mind, plus the knowledge that, at that moment, made him a stranger to himself. He had attempted, he had failed, but he had been pulled past the most dangerous point.

"As we stood there, I caught the sound of wooden sandals on the steps outside the walls. As I had expected, Arkah Mensah was coming to the castle. The footsteps were lost in the gateway, then echoed into the courtyard, and there followed the shuffle and scrape, the faint click of falling wood upon the flagstones.

"Then silence, but I could picture him on the dark stairs in the thickness of the walls, coming up with a slow,

relentless sort of steadiness. I could imagine him appearing suddenly in the light from the arches, the compassion on his fine, melancholy old face as he came forward to soothe, to make himself a little more necessary, to weave a little more tightly the web of a tormenting belief.

"Willoughby looked up from his letter, and our eyes met.

"'Shall I stay?' I asked, but his jaws snapped together as he answered: 'No, thank you. I prefer to meet him alone.'"

There was silence again, a silence of finality that showed there was no more to come. Then the tip of Hale's cigar made a slight arc of interrogation.

"But," he asked hesitatingly, "what you told Willoughby—about the head, I mean—was that true?"

And through the darkness came Festen's voice, cool and distinct:

"True? No. I was practicing a little fetish of my own."



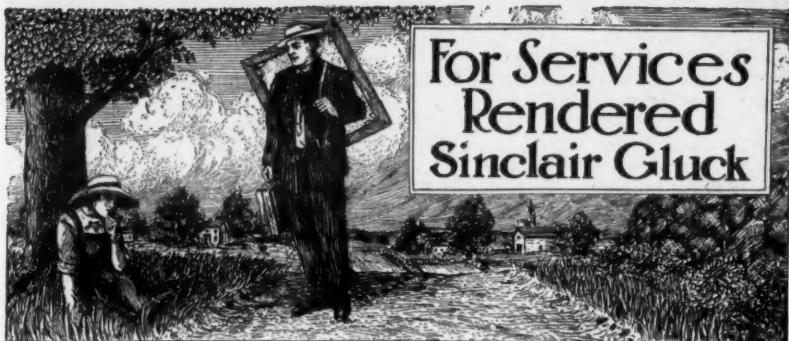
APRIL

APRIL for me is everywhere thou art,
And 'tis December every time we part,
Yea! though for other folk the wild white spring
Half heals, half breaks, the heart
With every lovely and rejoicing thing.

Before thy lightest footfall winter goes,
And turns to violets her shroud of snows,
The leafless desert when thy voice is heard
Fills with the budding rose,
And rings with song of the enraptured bird.

God spare me from the coming of a May
That can return, but thou be gone away.
Urgent with crowding leaf and cruel bloom!
Yet best for me to stay
Than thou in such a fearful empty room.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.



PERRINS did not have the slightest idea of an adventure when he started, which is probably why—

Perrins was tired of the city. How tired he did not realize until he found himself tramping along in the pleasant, muffling dust, with green—real, living green—all about him, and the hot sun thumping him friendly on the back, shimmering on the road before him, and, as far as his eye could travel, glowing genially and impartially on the landscape.

He had revolted suddenly at everything in his city life, and—this with a slow, ecstatic stretching of the muscles and a deep-drawn breath—here he was, twenty dollars in his pocket, and a sublime indifference as to whether he ever saw his studio or a dark-skinned, depreciative dealer again—for a while, anyway.

"Never," he thought contentedly, "was there more abject a grasshopper." And one had only to consider the day to wonder scornfully who'd be an ant.

Moreover, "up along" some little way, was a stile—he remembered it well—and seated upon it, one might smoke a pipe and gaze northward for miles over the misty lowland to the very, dim, uttermost edge of everything. Satiated with this, too, one might swing one's legs over the stile, pick a long, juicy grass stem to chew, and gaze southward over a far-off hamlet, dappled red and yellow, to land's end, the slumberous

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gray sea, and the ultimate falling-off place at its farthest edge.

A most excellent stile this, and not to be lightly thought of, as the farmer who had merely built it doubtless did. What is the chief end of such a stile? To help a man from one field to another? Bah! And Perrins hurried on, lest he find the farmer in possession, and inclined to curiosity concerning his guest.

One more wriggle around an enormous old oak that had magnificently and successfully defied the road to go over it, and the stile came in sight.

Alas, it was occupied—or rather inhabited!

Seated on the ground with his back to it, half buried in the tall grass, was a hunched-up figure in a frayed brown coat and a soft hat, sitting quite still. The stranger's face was bowed in his hands, and if Perrins had not been looking for the stile, he probably would not have noticed him at all from the road.

"Hail, comrade!" said Perrins, and vaulted the fence. "That's my stile, you know. I discovered it long before you did."

As he advanced, the figure raised a tear-stained face, and waved a small paw at him.

"Go away, please," it said, and turned its back, leaning its head on the first step of the stile.

Why, it was only a boy!

Perrins went up and thumped him on the back.

"Come, cheer up," he said. "You're much too big to cry."

"Ouch!" said the figure, and jerked a shoulder at him.

A sudden pity took Perrins as he noted the narrow shoulders.

"Come," he said, more gently, "what's the trouble?"

The boy was silent a moment, then he suddenly swung around and looked up.

"There's nothing the matter—old pal," he said in a gruff voice, smiling rather pathetically. "Go away, there's a good chap. I'm sleepy." Then he turned away again.

In sheer surprise, Perrins sat down and contemplated the back of the felt hat and the brown coat, much too large for the shaking little shoulders beneath.

The usurper of the stile was not a boy, but unmistakably a girl! The prettily curved, oval face, the delicate skin, the big, long-lashed, brown eyes—

In a moment, Perrins heard a muffled sob.

"I shall sit here," said he, "until to-morrow—"

The girl turned quickly. "I thought you'd gone," she said.

"—or the day after," said Perrins, "or the day after that, or until you tell me what the trouble is."

The girl looked wildly around and rose to her feet, disclosing a rusty, brown, man's suit, and a pair of heavy shoes much too large for her. Then she slipped to her knees again with a desperate little wail and buried her head in her arms on the stile step.

Perrins was in despair. Suddenly, however, a bright idea struck him.

"Look here, young fellow," he said. "What's the trouble? Perhaps I can help you. Come, pull yourself together and be a man. Are you broke?"

The girl ceased sobbing and was silent for a moment. Then she turned about. Perrins thought he detected a look of relief on her face.

"It's—it's my feet," she said, "partly."

Her voice sounded as if she were trying to speak from somewhere down

in the middle of her, and Perrins thought that it would have been funny if it hadn't been so pathetic. She looked him up and down quickly, and then let her eyes rest on his face. He looked as matter of fact as possible, and she went on:

"I—I've come a long way to-day, and my shoes don't fit very well. I can't walk—any more." Her voice ended in a sob, and she turned away again.

"Well, look here, son," said Perrins. "You don't look very husky. Suppose you let me help you a bit?"

There was no reply from the dusty little figure, merely a negative shake of the head.

"Well, all right," said Perrins, getting up and making his voice sound as offended as possible. He began to walk away slowly, looking back from time to time.

Presently the girl turned and looked after him in obvious and pathetic indecision, and Perrins stopped and waited. Then, as she made no sign, he started to walk on again.

"Please come back," she called, and he suddenly felt very much of a brute for some reason. He hurried back to her.

She was sitting with her feet curled up under her, and she looked up at him doubtfully as he approached.

"I just wanted to thank you for offering. I really don't—need any help," she said.

"Nonsense," said Perrins brusquely. "Come, let's have a look at those feet of yours."

The girl pulled her feet farther under her. "Oh, no—thank you," she said quickly. "They're all right—really."

Perrins assumed a patiently resigned expression, and sat down in front of her. "Well, really," he said, "what sort of a chap are you anyway?"

The girl's big brown eyes searched his face for a moment, but Perrins merely stared back, impersonally interrogative.

Presently she uncurled and thrust forward a tentative foot in its large shoe. Part of the sole was entirely

gone, and in one spot the dusty, scratched little foot showed through.

Perrins dropped his eyes to hide the compassion in them, and began to unlace the clumsy affair. Then he drew it gently off, while the girl sat and eyed him. The sock beneath was thin and frayed away at the heel and toes.

"That's bad, son," said Perrins judicially; "very bad. How in the world did you get in such a state? Let's see the other one."

The girl complied, and Perrins carefully unlaced and drew off the other shoe. The foot inside was in bad shape, too, and it was bleeding from a jagged cut where a stone had pierced the sole of the shoe.

"Great Scott!" said Perrins. "How in the world did you ever keep on so long, with your feet in that condition? I couldn't."

"I had to," said the girl in her natural voice. Perrins gave no sign that he noticed the change, however.

"Well, I'll tell you what we'll do," he said. "You stay here and get those socks off, and I'll go and get something to fix you up with temporarily. Perhaps you'd better move along to those trees where people won't see you from the road. Eh?"

The girl stared at him a moment. "Please don't bother," she said at last.

"Can you walk?" asked Perrins. "I guess I can carry you all right, if your feet hurt too much."

She got quickly to her feet, and took his arm, and he led her into a grove of trees farther from the road. As soon as she was comfortably seated, he extracted a promise to wait for him, and then hurried away.

As he left her he inquired: "What size shoe do you wear, son?"

"Three and a half," said the girl promptly. "That is—ah—eights, I think. But you—"

"All right," said Perrins.

As he strode down the hill again, his mind was in a tumult. How in the world had she got into such a state? What a weird thing to have happen to him!

"I'd bet all I had she's well educated and well brought up, and straight as a string. She's extremely pretty, and in her own clothes she'd be more so, and here she is wandering around the country with nobody to look after her. It's a darned shame! I'd like to have a few words with her people." And so forth, and so forth. From which the state of Mr. Perrins' mind may be fairly well conjectured.

In the village store he bought some bandages and ointment, and the smallest pair of socks they had. Then he thought better of it, and bought a pair of thick stockings of the right size, as nearly as he could guess. He also bought a bottle of milk and several sandwiches, while the storekeeper stared at him in dull and suspicious amazement. Finally he asked if there was a shoe store in the place.

"Cobbler sells 'em," said the storekeeper, and, as Perrins thanked him and departed with his packages, "Loony as they make 'em," he said, tapping his forehead significantly. Then he returned to his cracker box, and his three-days-old newspaper.

At the cobbler's, the choice was not a large one, but Perrins finally discovered a pair of shoes of the right size, that looked as if they might hold together for a day or two, anyway. He borrowed a pail from the cobbler, filled it with water, and tramped up the hill again, looking, as he told himself, extremely like a commuter on Christmas Eve. With some difficulty he got himself and his packages over the fence, and finally reached the grove of trees.

It was deserted.

Perrins set down his pail, dropped his packages, and sat down.

"Well——" he remarked.

Then, reflecting that the girl couldn't have gone very far, he got up and hurried through the grove, and out into a field beyond. There was another fence between this field and the grove, and, looking along it, he presently saw that the tall grass had been beaten down in a line running out into the field. Along the fence to this line he made his way, and, following the latter, came upon the

little scrap of unhappy humanity for which he was looking, curled up in a ball in the long grass. She was sound asleep, and Perrins noticed that she had put her ridiculous shoes on again.

He spoke to her, and then stooped and shook her arm gently, but she did not stir.

Perrins glanced about him in perplexity. One thing was certain—he couldn't leave her where she was; and she was so obviously exhausted that he did not like to wake her. He decided that he would have to run the risk of frightening her if she woke, and, kneeling, he picked her up very gently in his arms, and made his way back to his packages and his pail. Fortunately the fence between was a low one, and he negotiated it without disturbing his sleeping burden. She hardly moved, except to settle her head more comfortably on his shoulder, and when he reached his destination, and set her down with her back against a tree, he had to prop her head up to keep it from falling forward on her chest.

Perrins began tramping up and down in front of her. He was in a curious state.

In the first place he was rather winded with his rapid climb up the hill and his more recent maneuvers. In the second place, the sight of the forlorn little figure lying utterly relaxed against the tree—even her hands had fallen naturally, palms upward, at either side of her—had aroused his furious indignation at the person or persons unknown who had let her get to this pass. And in the third place, the natural, trusting way in which her slender body had lain in his arms had given him a curious feeling of elation and tenderness. So he was very near the boiling point, and he strode up and down for several minutes alternately abusing imaginary relatives of the girl's and racking his brains as to what in the world to do with her.

Presently she stirred, caught her breath in a little sob, and opened her eyes. She looked about her in a dazed way, and Perrins was at her side at once.

"Sit still," he said, as she tried to rise.

She sank back again and looked up at him.

"You—you found me," she said. "I thought you weren't coming back—and—there isn't anywhere—to go." She began to cry again softly.

"You poor——" began Perrins and knelt beside her. Then he changed his mind, and got up again. "Are you hungry?"

She nodded. "How did I get here?" she asked.

"I carried you," said Perrins gruffly. "Here, take this." He handed her the bottle of milk and the sandwiches. "There isn't any glass," he added ruefully, and, kneeling, began to take off her shoes again.

"But—I can't let you get things for me like this. I—I haven't any—that is—I mean I can only thank you—I mean—Oh, dear!"

"Quite so," said Perrins, in a husky voice. She had begun ravenously on his sandwiches.

When the shoes were off, Perrins sat back and glanced at her feet, and then at her face, which at that moment was nearly obliterated by the milk bottle.

"Will you——" he began.

The girl blushed, and drew in her feet to the imminent peril of the milk bottle, and Perrins turned his back and began to fuss with his packages. When he turned again, the socks were off, and the dusty little feet were almost hidden in the grass.

He sat down and began in a businesslike way to bathe them with the water in the pail and part of the bandage.

"Please—let me do that," said the girl.

"You sit still, and behave yourself, and get on with those sandwiches, young fellow," said Perrins.

In a moment he was conscious that the girl had set the things down, and was staring at him.

"When did you know?" she asked.

"When did I——" said Perrins, and stopped. She was looking at him half

shyly, half curiously, and she had drawn her foot away.

"From the first minute you spoke," he said, and regained possession of the foot. She let him take it, and said nothing for a moment; then, as he was bathing the cut in one sole, he heard a faint sound from its owner.

"Did I hurt you?" he asked quickly.

She shook her head and smiled. "I—I think you're rather wonderful," she said.

Perrins felt as if he were choking, and he put his hand up and loosened his collar. He would have given everything he possessed, just at that moment, to kiss the small, white foot in his hand, but he didn't even tighten his hold on it. Nevertheless, the girl took alarm, for some reason, and pulled it away.

"Please don't—don't think—anything," she said.

"About what?" asked Perrins, reaching for the foot again.

"About me," said the girl. "Being dressed like this, and—everything." She let him take her foot in his hand again.

"I'm not," said Perrins, in a matter-of-fact tone. "Besides, you're going to tell me all about it presently."

The girl said nothing, while he was dressing first one foot, and then the other. Finally she spoke.

"My name is Edith Willis," she said. "I don't know how to thank you—or what to say to you for all—"

"No thanks are necessary, my dear Miss Willis," said Perrins. "Mine is Tom—er—Thomas Perrins."

Miss Willis laughed. "We ought to shake hands," she said, and held out her hand.

Perrins took it and shook it. Then he went on with his bandaging. He kept his head down because his face was red, and he knew it. Presently—the job took him some time—he looked up again.

Miss Willis had finished the sand-wiches and her head was leaning back against the tree. She was fast asleep again, he thought. Something tightened in his throat, and he rose to his

feet, and stretched his arms out straight on either side of him.

"Oh—you—little—darling!" he said, under his breath. Then he began to rummage among the débris of his packages.

Behind him, two brown eyes opened cautiously and regarded his back with somewhat tremulous perplexity. They closed tight again as he turned.

"Miss Willis," he said softly.

But Miss Willis never stirred.

He stood for a moment, undecided. Then he took his pipe, tobacco, and matches out of his coat, slipped it off, and wrapped it around the little, bandaged feet. She might just as well sleep as do anything else that he could think of. Besides, he wanted to think.

He sat down some distance away, and went back over the whole occurrence, trying to figure out some plausible reason for the girl's situation. The thing that amazed him most was the fact that he did not feel more amazed at it all, but he could not come to any decision. One thing, however, he determined upon: now that he had found her, he did not intend to lose her again; that was flat.

Presently the sunlight crept to the girl's face, and she stirred and opened her eyes. She looked down at her feet and then at the man in his shirt sleeves, smoking and evidently deep in thought. "Oh, you mustn't," she said. "Here, put your coat on at once. You'll catch cold."

Perrins jumped up.

"Indeed I won't," he said. "Do you feel better?"

"Ever so much better. You've been—oh, so good to me! How can I ever do anything to—to show you how much—"

"Wait a minute," said Perrins. "How are the feet?"

"Oh, ever so much better. You've been—"

"Well, then," he interrupted, "promise not to laugh, and I'll show you what I got in the village."

"What?" she asked.

Perrins produced the stockings and laid them on her lap. "I couldn't get

any socks small enough," he explained anxiously.

The girl blushed and then laughed.

"How are the shoes?" said Perrins hastily. "I'll go and scout around while you put them on. Can you manage the stockings? I mean, have you—I mean—will they do?"

Miss Willis, a very bright red now, nodded silently, and Perrins, much the same color, if a rather deeper shade, tramped off through the woods, cursing himself.

Ten minutes or so later he was back again, somewhat more composed. He found the girl where he had left her. She was standing up and brushing off her dilapidated brown suit, and her hat was off. He saw that her hair had been piled tight upon her head in a rough-and-ready fashion, but the lines of her figure as she bent were so slenderly, gracefully unmistakable that he wondered how she had escaped detection on the long tramp she must have taken.

She shrank away a little as he came up, and tried to draw her coat about her, and Perrins looked away hastily.

"All O. K. now?" he asked. "Do the shoes fit?"

"Beautifully, thank you. I—I can't do much now to show you how grateful I am for all you've done. Perhaps I'll be able to some day. Will you tell me where you live, before—before I go?"

"Surely," said Perrins. "But you're not going yet, are you? Please sit down again." And he sat down.

"I think—I'd better——"

"Where are you going?" asked Perrins, looking up at her. He hated himself for a brute, but he had to find out about her. He couldn't let her go like that.

"I don't—quite know—yet," she said.

"Well, that can wait a bit then, can't it?"

"I suppose so."

And Miss Willis, not too unwillingly, curled herself up again at the foot of the tree.

"Now," said Perrins, "won't you tell me all about yourself, and how you

happened to get into this fix? Perhaps I can help a little."

"But I can't let you—— Don't you see——"

"Look here, Miss Willis—why, good heavens, you can't go on like this—— But never mind. Do you live near here?"

Miss Willis did not speak for several moments. Then she looked up quickly.

"Not very far," she said. "Near Middlecote. It's about twenty miles from here, I think."

"Why did you leave there?" said Perrins gently.

"My father died. He died about a month ago. He was an inventor, and we lived a mile or so from the village. Two years ago he was badly hurt in an explosion, and he never got really well again. They hated him in the village, because he felt contemptuous toward them and showed it. He wasn't very easy to get on with, but we were fond of each other in a way. My mother died when I was little.

"Well, when father died, people came up from the village—the minister and two old ladies—and they asked questions, and looked all through the house, but there wasn't anything there. They said father had had a pension, but it would stop now, and that I could come and be a sort of companion-servant for one of them. The old ladies, I mean. I didn't want to do that, so they said I would have to—go to the poorhouse."

"My God!" Perrins almost-shouted. "Haven't you any relatives?"

Miss Willis shook her head.

"I had a good education," she went on quietly. "And I had one girl friend in the village, but she went away before father died. So I decided to go to the city, and see if I couldn't earn my own living. I had no money, and I didn't dare ask any one for any, or they would have asked questions, so I decided to walk." She stopped, and looked down at her clothes, and her voice broke a little. "This was an old suit of father's. I thought no one would notice me in it until I got to the city, and that then I could find some woman who would help me. So I came

away. I was afraid, if I went in my own clothes, they would find me and take me back. That's all. I don't believe I knew what I was doing very well. People weren't very kind after my father died, and I only wanted to get away from it all. You see, father had kept himself and me away from the village rather, and they resented it, I think."

Perrins sat absolutely stunned for a moment. Such a tale of cold-blooded spite and cruelty in this enlightened age shocked him beyond expression.

"Do you mean to say that you haven't a penny, or a single friend, or any one to help you?" he said, at last. "Do you know any one in the city?"

"I am sure I can get some work to do there."

"Have you ever been there? Do you know anything about the city?"

"Not very much," said Miss Willis.

Perrins gave a long whistle. "Good heavens!" he said. "And you—why, you were hurrying to— Never mind, though. Jove, I'd like to take a trip over to Middlecote, and interview that minister and those two old women!"

Miss Willis showed signs of alarm at this, so he stopped and thought for a moment, while she sat in her dusty brown suit, with her legs curled under her, and her big, brown eyes staring straight in front of her. Perrins glanced up, and noticed anew the lines of pain and fatigue on the delicate, oval face. He reached out and took her hand.

"I think *you're* wonderful," he said. "You're a wonderfully plucky girl."

Miss Willis turned to him impulsively. "I'm not," she said. "I haven't told you the—I haven't told you everything." But Perrins took no notice.

"I want to ask you something," he said. "Do you think you can trust me?"

She looked at him a minute and, drawing away her hand, nodded gravely.

Perrins jumped to his feet. "Come along then," he said. "Can you walk?"

Miss Willis got up. "Where are you going?"

"To the city, and you're coming with me. I live there. Lord, it's lucky I saw you! Why— Never mind. You're coming with me. I'm going to take you to my sister and— Thank God I found you!"

"Don't!" said Miss Willis shamefacedly. "I'm ashamed. I'm not—" But she evidently changed her mind, for she stopped there, and went up and took his arm.

"I'll go with you," she said simply. Then she looked down at her feet.

"Won't—won't these shoes give me away, though? Perhaps I'd better wear the others now that my feet are all right again, thanks to you. I'll take these with me and—use them later." She smiled.

He helped her change shoes again, and they wrapped the new purchases up in their old paper, and set off down the hill to the station together.

The girl was very weary, and said little while they waited for the train, and Perrins was far too full of his curious experience, and the sweet emotion engendered by the presence of his charge and her absolute trust in him to open his mouth.

They had no trouble at the station or on the train when it finally arrived. Miss Willis kept her hat pulled down, and her hands in her pockets, and did not speak, and though the solicitous manner in which Perrins helped his shabby gentleman friend onto the train might have occasioned surprise, no one appeared to notice them.

On the journey, which was not a long one, Perrins outlined his plan.

"My sister and I," said he, "have a studio, and I shall take you directly there, and she will fix you up as to clothes. Then, to-morrow, we can talk over what you are to do. If you will forgive my saying so, I can easily get you work as a model if you like, for you—well, you are a regular 'Trilby,' you know."

Miss Willis kept her head down and said nothing to this, and Perrins relapsed into silence. Presently, as he watched her, he noticed that her shoulders were trembling a little, and he laid

his hand solicitously on hers. Miss Willis looked up quickly, and he was relieved to see that her eyes were dry, although the red mouth was drawn down a little sadly at the corners. The glance she gave him, however, was so full of warm gratitude and regard that Perrins glowed and tingled to the very tips of his fingers and toes. She let him retain her hand for a moment or two, and he said nothing more until they reached the city. Then he put her into a cab and drove straight to the studio.

Darkness had fallen by the time they reached it, and Perrins ushered the girl in and switched on the lights.

"Oh, how splendid!" cried Miss Willis, sinking into a chair.

Now his studio was Perrins' particular pride. Although it was a working studio, he had contrived to make it at once beautiful and practical, and Miss Willis' remark went straight to his heart.

Of course there may have been something in the way in which he ushered her in—

"I'll go and find Freda," said Perrins, in a tone of great content, and went out. Presently he was back again.

"Miss Willis," he said, "I—Please don't be—I mean, don't—don't think anything, but—Freda isn't here." His tone was almost tragic.

Miss Willis rose to her feet. "Well, then," she said, and her voice had almost a soothing quality in it, "we'll just have to wait, won't we?" She did not seem alarmed, and Perrins' face expressed considerable relief at the fact.

"Yes," he said; "unless—I know she would love to have you—I mean, if you want to go to her room and put on— It doesn't matter to me of course—but—"

"I should like to," said Miss Willis, smiling. "I'd much rather not meet her in these clothes. Are you sure she wouldn't mind?"

"Not a bit," said Perrins, in a tone of strong conviction.

He led the girl to a room off the studio, and separated from it by a heavy curtain, and told her to put on what-

ever she could find. Then he went back to the studio, after the girl had gratefully promised to help herself to anything she wanted.

Perrins sat down in a chair and considerable mental disorder to get his head clear again and think things over.

"My Lord," he thought, "here's responsibility with a vengeance! I'm an ant again—or an aunt—but who," he asked himself, "would be a grasshopper?" He could not help feeling a little scornful toward all such.

In the midst of his reflections, he heard a cab stop outside, and sprang to his feet. It must be Freda, and now all would be well.

The studio was on the ground floor, and the next instant there was a rapid and violent tattoo on the door.

Perrins opened it quickly, and into the room strode an exceedingly large and tall gentleman of some twenty years, with an exceedingly ugly look in his eye, and a large and heavy walking stick in his hand.

The newcomer glanced around, and then turned menacingly on the amazed Perrins.

"What have you done with my sister?" he demanded, in a voice harsh with anxiety.

"Who—who the deuce are you?" said Perrins, taking up a strategic position behind the table. "I haven't got your sister. Get out of here!"

"I know she came in here. The cabby told me so," said the newcomer, advancing. "What have you done with her? Hurry up, now! I found out about you at the station, and took the next train. Hurry up, now! Where is she?" He raised the stick in a threatening manner.

Perrins was just feeling about in the drawer of the table for a revolver that ought to be there, but of course was not, when his attention was distracted.

In the doorway of his sister's room appeared a vision of loveliness. Her hair was flowing in waves about her face, now flushed and animated with excitement. The rest of her, except for one white arm and shoulder, was enveloped in a large and brightly tinted

bedquilt, which the arm in question was holding together.

"Bob," said the vision sharply, "stop making a fool of yourself, and put down that stick this instant! Mr. Perrins has been kindness itself; while you—you—" Her voice became withering. "Well, I'll talk to you later. In the meantime, you can spend your time thanking Mr. Perrins for taking care of me until I can get into some clothes. Have you got mine?"

The large young gentleman fell back and dropped his stick, looking very much nonplused. "Eh?" he said. "Yes; they're in the cab."

"Well, go and get them then," said the vision, stamping her foot. "Don't stand there staring!" And she disappeared.

"What the——" began Perrins.

The newcomer turned to him. "Look here. I beg your pardon—— But I'd better get those clothes." And he disappeared.

Mr. Perrins sat down rather heavily. "Well, I'll be——" he began, but at this moment the vision reappeared, now entirely enveloped in the bedquilt.

"Mr. Perrins," she said, "I can only apologize. I told you that what I had said wasn't quite accurate; but please believe me a little longer until I can dress and explain it all to you. I——"

At this moment the young man returned with a suit case.

"Here," the girl went on to him, "give me that. Now I want you to sit down and not say a word to Mr. Perrins until I can get dressed." Again she disappeared.

"Will you kindly tell me——" began Perrins.

But the newcomer laid his finger on his lip and came over to him. "I'm going to catch it anyway," he whispered. "For goodness sake don't talk, or it will make it worse for me!" He smiled in a whimsically imploring way, and sat down again.

Perrins, though considerably puzzled, sat down, too, and determined to wait patiently for an explanation. He glanced at the young man from time to time, but the latter merely nodded

vigorously and indicated the door through which the vision had disappeared.

Presently the curtain was thrust back and the girl swept into the studio, and straight up to Perrins' chair. In her feminine apparel she was prettier than ever, thought Perrins, in the instant's grace given him to regard the *tout ensemble*.

"Mr. Perrins," she said at once, "please forgive me. I'll tell you everything. I should have told you at the time, but it would have been too ridiculous, and I couldn't. You see, Bob—my brother, here—and I went on a tramp, and I made him let me wear those clothes you found me in. I wanted to mix with men—farmers—and see what they thought and talked about, and I couldn't possibly if I went as a girl. Then this morning, Bob was so long over his breakfast that I started out alone, and he was to catch up to me. But he didn't come, and I walked on for ever so long, thinking every minute that he would overtake me. But he didn't, and I began to be frightened. So I turned back, as I thought, but I got all mixed up over the road back, and I couldn't find Bob, and my shoes were giving out, and I had been walking for hours when you found me. I didn't dare ask any one on the road for fear they would find out I was a girl——"

"You must have taken the long road to Middlecote, and I took the short one," interjected her brother.

"Well," the girl went on, to the still mystified Perrins, "when you found me I had no idea I was so near Dene—where we took the train, you know. That was the place that we started from this morning. And I was tired, and hungry, and frightened. Then"—Miss Willis paused, and looked at Perrins appealingly—"you *were* so kind, and I did want to see what it would be like to be—rescued—and how nice men really could be, and I was afraid you'd be disappointed and shocked if I told you the real reason—so I made up that story to—make things fit in well.

"It was crazy of me and ungrateful,

too. Please forgive me. I was just as badly off as if the story were true, really. I don't know what I should have done if you hadn't helped me." She looked at him imploringly, so that if "Bob" had not been present, Perrins would have assured her warmly of his entire forgiveness. "Besides," she went on, "I didn't know where Bob was, and I was sick and tired of tramping, and Bob had all the money, so I let you bring me back to town—" She paused.

"Do you live in the city, then?" said Perrins, after a minute.

"Yes, twenty-four Northcote Gardens. You will forgive me, and come and see me, won't you? I can't tell you how grateful I am, for you really did save me, and it wasn't a very nice way to repay you, to deceive you."

"Say, what is all this, anyway?" said the brother.

They paid no attention to him.

"It's all right, of course," said Perrins slowly. He was still rather dazed. "Twenty-four Northcote Gardens?"

"Yes," said the girl, laughing. "Come to-morrow—can you?—and let me thank you properly."

"I will," said Perrins. He picked up a pencil, and wrote the address on the blotter in an absent way.

Then Mr. Robert Willis broke into the conversation, and after he had been told as much of the day's happenings as his sister thought necessary, he was very pleasantly grateful to Perrins, though he insisted on making good the latter's disbursement.

Standing in the studio doorway, Miss Willis held out her hand and looked into Perrins' eyes in a very charming manner.

"To-morrow?" she said.

"Yes, indeed," said Perrins. He was still a little dazed by complex emotions.

"What is the matter with your eyelids?" inquired Miss Willis in an interested tone. "Let me see." She put her hands on his arms, and, coming closer, looked at his eyes.

"Shut them a minute," she ordered.

Perrins complied.

The next instant he felt a sweet breath on his face, and two warm little lips touched his lightly. He opened his eyes, but Miss Willis was halfway to the cab.

Two words floated softly back to him on the night air as he stood and stared after her.

They were: "Thank you."

Perrins went back to his studio and sat down and cogitated.





The Convert

BY NEITH BOYCE

THE two newspapers in Arden were equally divided on the suffrage question. The *Sentinel*, conservative and respectable, warmly advocated the franchise for women. Its editor was a brilliant young man named Hector Frye, supposed to be betrothed to Arden's leading female suffragist, Miss Millicent James. Gossip said that Millicent would marry Mr. Frye when the women's bill should pass the legislature. At any rate, she was given credit for securing Mr. Frye's aid in the battle for equal rights. And it was he personally who had carried over the *Sentinel*, which had previously wavered on the fence, and had made Votes for Women a dignified public issue in Arden. Obviously the value of such a champion was hardly to be overestimated.

The opposition was led by the *Times*, temperamental and disreputable. The *Times* was owned by a local sport named Colonel Banford—proprietor, also, of the race track and several saloons—and was supposed to be edited by the office boy. It was an amusing paper. It printed everything, especially things rejected as improper and scandalous by the *Sentinel*. The *Times* was often referred to by the *Sentinel* as "the wastebasket," and its pet name for the *Sentinel* was "the mausoleum."

Colonel Banford did not care if his paper shocked Arden; Arden read it and that was all he cared about. He

did not mind being sued for libel because he could not be convicted, politics being what they were. He did not mind being ostracized by the respectable ladies of Arden, for he did not want to associate with those ladies. He was a salted bachelor of sixty-odd. He had, however, his sentimental side; and it was this side of him that was offended by the idea of woman suffrage. The colonel clung to the old-fashioned idea of the home. He had a chivalric ideal of woman, as representing everything soft and seducing and glamorous. The spectacle of the sex preparing to leave its shrine in the heart of man for the sordid arena of politics shocked him to the depths of his manly soul.

Therefore, from the beginning of the suffrage agitation in Arden, the *Times* had violently opposed the movement. The colonel wielded what used to be called a trenchant pen. His style of rhetoric depended largely upon vigorous epithet; his sarcasm was clumsy and crude; but it had to be confessed that his editorial attacks on the Cause had steadily gained effectiveness. Instead of the heavy artillery of oburgation with which he had begun, there was now incessant sharpshooting—short paragraphs, flippant and barbed, embodying all the sneers and jeers that could be flung at the ladies of Arden, and at the *Sentinel*, their defender.

The ladies not only contemned, but hated the colonel, and looked forward, when they should vote, to the pleasing

duty of driving him out of politics and business. Some of the sisterhood, who had interviewed and attempted to convert him, and had in return been favored with an especially blunt expression of his opinions, considered that the only proper answer to him was a horsewhip. Possibly some husband or brother might have been incited to apply this retort if it had not been for Millicent James.

"We must fight our own battles," said she firmly. "To get some man to do it for us would be a weak reversion."

This was all very well, but Millicent herself had been trying for nearly a year to organize a men's league; and, as has been said, she was held to have inspired Hector Frye's ardor for equal suffrage. Over their teacups, the sisters permitted themselves some criticism of their young leader. It was well to be wrapped up in the Cause, as Millicent proclaimed herself to be, but her behavior to Mr. Frye really gave some color to, for example, the *Times'* favorite charge that feminism meant the destruction of the feminine. Not that Millicent wasn't feminine enough—but to keep that poor young man dangling, as she had done for two years, making use of him, even for the Cause—Well, she might boast of her convert, but it was possible to try him too far. A certain slackening of the *Sentinel's* enthusiasm had been evident of late, together with unusually vicious attacks in the *Times*—and with the bill coming up, too, for its annual vote! Millicent would better look to herself.

Millicent was very busy, preparing for her visit to the State capital. She had an uncommonly dashing frock for the occasion, and she had also a smashing speech. Hector Frye had been consulted on several points in the latter, but Millicent was not yet satisfied with it. And having an appointment, on the afternoon before her departure, to walk with Hector, she proposed using that time to go over the speech. She put on the gown, and was perfectly satisfied with that. But the day was lowering, the gown was not a rainy-day gown,

and when Hector Frye was shown into the study to Millicent, he embraced the situation at a glance, even to the type-written speech on the desk.

The mild warmth of Millicent's greeting did not prevent his brow from darkening. Millicent was much given to light caresses; she liked the atmosphere of warmth as a cat likes a fire. She was maidenly elusive, but she was also clinging and cajoling; in short, something of a coquette, though she would indignantly have denied it, believing coquetry to be a weapon of the lower and more primitive order of female.

"Aren't you going out?" Hector asked.

"I thought," said Millicent swiftly, "that, as it's so dark, we might stay in here. There are one or two things that I want to talk to you about." Seeing that the gloom deepened on her admirer's brow, she added instinctively: "You must tell me how you like my dress."

"Very pretty," said Hector shortly, as she turned her tall figure and light draperies about before him, smiling.

"But do you like it, really?"

"Oh, yes. If I were a legislator, I'm sure it would influence my vote—especially if a smile went with it."

"You are displeased about something," said Millicent, with dignity. "What is it?"

"Oh, nothing—nothing that matters. What was it you wanted to talk to me about?"

"Nothing, while you are in this mood. I don't want to bore you. Sit down and let me make you a cup of tea."

"Thank you," said Hector darkly. "I don't want any tea."

"Well, have some whisky and soda, then."

"Nor whisky, either. If you don't want to walk with me or talk with me, Millicent, I'll go back to the office. I have a lot of work to do."

"Oh, Hector, don't be so unreasonable!" remonstrated Millicent, putting her hand on his shoulder and her fair, cool cheek against his. "It's unkind of you, when I have so much on my mind."

If you'll wait a minute, I'll change my dress and we'll go out."

"I don't want to drag you out," said Hector sulkily, averting his face from Millicent's.

"I don't know what you *do* want, then," said Millicent, dropping her hand, and moving away.

The young man looked rebelliously at her graceful figure, which now expressed in every line a sense of unmerited rebuff.

"Yes, you do know," he said bitterly. "You *know*, but you can't or won't understand. You can't or won't realize what it means to me, the sort of thing that you've just done, that you're always doing—putting me off, postponing me, to second or third place in your thoughts and interest—always!"

"Again!" said Millicent.

"Yes, again and again! So long as you do it, I must complain—unless I do what I ought to have done long ago, as soon as I saw the situation clearly—give you up and go away."

"I really don't know *what* this is all about," declared Millicent with amazement. "Nor why you blaze out at me as you do, when you know——"

"Oh, yes, I know! When you want to devote all your time and attention to something much more important than my insignificant self. Your speech is——"

"I was about to say," interrupted Millicent, "when you *know* my affection for you, and my dream of our working together——"

"Well, how can we, if we're *not* together? If we were, I could work then, do anything. As it is, I'm losing interest in my work, and even"—the young man laughed hollowly—"even in your work!"

"I know it!" cried Millicent. "Your enthusiasm is waning, and you are letting your personal feelings interfere with your sense of justice and right. Don't think I haven't noticed it. You are failing in the thick of the fight. I am hurt, deeply disappointed. I thought I could rely——"

"You thought my love for you would continue to blind me to your lack of

love for me," said the young man with trembling lips. "But on the contrary, love is cruelly clear-sighted. I won't say that I think you could have loved me if your mind hadn't been preoccupied with politics. No, that needn't have interfered. I don't think you ever would have loved me. I am going."

He took up his hat and moved to the door. There he paused, waiting dully for one of those apparently impulsive advances with which Millicent was wont to silence his complaints, to appease him for the moment, to coax him by protestations and pretty kisses into the semblance of content. But this time she made no motion toward him. So he said huskily, "Good-by," and went.

And Millicent stood by the window in her pretty dress, and looked at the dismal sky outside—and unhappy tears rolled down her smooth cheeks. She was very fond of Hector, and a quarrel with him cast the hues of mourning over the whole world—and he knew it—well he knew it! And how very unkind, how cruel and inconsiderate of him, to quarrel with her at this moment, when he was perfectly aware what an important day was before her, and how their disagreements upset her! How absurd to talk of women being personal and too much swayed by their emotions, when men were a thousand times more egotistic and irrational! Now she would have to wrestle with that speech alone, and—— What a bore the speech was, anyway! What a bore everything was! In a passion, she flung her manuscript into a drawer, tied up the telephone, left word that she had a headache, and was not to be disturbed, and retired from the world with a volume of Balzac.

The book was entertaining, but she was aggrievedly conscious that it would have been far pleasanter for her to dine and spend the evening with Hector, as she had intended—and assuredly it would have been pleasanter for Hector. Once more his impatience had spoiled their hours together. How stupid of him not to enjoy these hours of courtship, when they would certainly be

married some time; and marriage was problematical, whereas courtship was undeniably agreeable, at least for Millicent. As for his leaving her, as he often threatened, that was nonsense. She meant to marry him, but not just at present. Vaguely Millicent felt that marriage was a serious matter, even for a capable, intelligent, and advanced young person of twenty-seven—perhaps especially for such a person. It would have been different, too, if Hector had been different—less emotional, temperamental, violent. Still, what a charming, lovable creature he was, and how his very unreason endeared him to her! She fell asleep, smiling fondly at the thought of him.

The next day, fresh and resolute, Millicent headed the delegation going to assault the embattled legislators. The Women's League, with banners and the town band, escorted them to the train. Cheers and salutations, both friendly and ironical, greeted the progress of the ladies down the main street of Arden. Three men, respectable, middle-aged husbands, marched in the ranks, smiling palely at the remarks leveled at them from the curb. The *Sentinel* had strung a banner across the street, on which appeared the words:

**OUR MOTHERS, WIVES, AND SISTERS!
HAIL! VICTORY!**

The *Times*, likewise, had its banner, crudely hung out at the last moment over the head of the advancing column:

**OUR MOTHERS-IN-LAW AND MAIDEN
AUNTS!**

HAIL! RAIN! SNOW! FOUL WEATHER!

Millicent marched, head erect, and eyes full of fire, carrying a purple, green, and white flag. Carrying, also, in her wounded bosom the knowledge that not only was Hector Frye absent from the firing line—he had nearly promised to march with the three brave husbands—but that his defection was marked by the omission of the *Sentinel's* usual editorial on this important day to the women of Arden. Not a word. Everybody in Arden was, of

course, aware of it. In comparison with this flagrant desertion, it was nothing that Hector was not at the station to bid her good-by, that he had not sent her the customary bunch of violets tied with green and white ribbons. It was nothing. Millicent repeated to herself, smiling fixedly as the train pulled out amid cheers and brays from the band.

And still another blow was in store for her. It was, to be sure, only an article in the despicable *Times*, but a shaft tipped with venom and aimed at Millicent's personal bosom. Already read by all her fellow delegates, this article, together with Mr. Frye's defection, formed the subject of excited comment, low-toned not to reach Millicent's ear, but going on all about her, as she would have been aware if she had not been absorbed in painful reverie. After a time, rousing herself, but still disinclined to talk, she took up the newspaper folded on the seat beside her, and, glancing absently over the *Times*, found on the editorial page the following:

PARABLE.

Some say it was the devil who made this fair model of a woman and sent her on earth for the torment of men. Others, that certain people, by mechanical skill, succeeded in constructing an automaton so wonderfully ingenious that to look at it you would never suspect that it had not a heart and a brain. For this automaton had the shape of a woman, with cheeks blushing as if with real blood, and eyes as soft as if a real feminine soul dwelt behind them. And she possessed also all those little feminine arts and wiles that are so entirely without significance that they can easily be performed mechanically. Where the brain of a real woman would have been, the automaton had a sort of clockwork that responded to certain stimuli and produced speech closely resembling at times rational argument. In place of the heart, there was an electric battery, which naturally was not susceptible either to pain or to love.

The creators of this ingenious imitation named it "The New Woman," and proclaimed that in sufficient numbers it would do away with many of the emotional ills and disorders incident to the old régime; as much of the work of the world, and particularly the advancement of women, could be performed by such contrivances much better than by ordinary women subject to low human affections. And, in fact, this automaton demonstrated satisfactorily that a great reform in human institutions can be

carried on without either a heart or a brain; and so clearly proved her superiority as a worker for the cause of Woman's rights that she was speedily promoted to leadership.

But a melancholy thing happened, owing to the lack of comprehension at first of this wonderful new type. It will hardly be believed that a man of ordinary mental powers could be long deceived into thinking this automaton a real human being of flesh and blood. But so it happened, and such a man actually fell in love with the beautiful shell of this creature, and became so maddened that he devoted his life to prove that, far from being incapable of the feelings of even the meanest woman, she was in reality able to understand and reciprocate the loftiest and most delicate emotion.

It would have touched a heart of stone to see this poor Pygmalion, dealing with a substance more incapable of response than any marble, day by day offering up his heart on an empty shrine. In vain were his ardent protestations of love interrupted by the mechanical speech of the pseudo-woman, which would exclaim, "Votes for Women!" even in the midst of the most impassioned appeals of the lover. Indeed, so deluded was the latter that he would even echo these words of his idol, hoping, perhaps, to touch her by his sympathy.

In truth there was something very absurd and laughable in this self-deception of a previously sane man. But pity for him overcame the general derision when he was seen to be really mad and removed to seclusion, a wreck.

The automaton, naturally unmoved by this occurrence, still pursues a successful career. And it is believed that if enough of such disinterested workers can be secured, the triumph of the cause will not be long delayed.

Millicent read and reread this article. She had sufficient self-control not to betray its effect on her. She continued to turn over the pages of the *Times*; then chatted with various delegates for half an hour or so; and finally took out the manuscript of her speech and apparently devoted herself to reading and penciling this important document.

In reality she was quite otherwise occupied. She was searching bewilderedly, among those who knew her well, for the person who could have aimed that blow at her. It was not Colonel Banford's hand; he could not have written that article. Some personal enemy stood behind him. And some one who bore malice to Hector as well as to her. That was the worst of it.

Millicent felt that she could endure the pains of publicity for herself, as martyrdom in a just cause, but to drag in Hector and their personal relation! To make Hector appear ridiculous in the eyes of all Arden!

Tears of exasperation rose to her own eyes, but she quickly suppressed all show of emotion. Perhaps even now that secret enemy was watching her!

Millicent's speech was a failure. She went through it mechanically, with none of her usual spirit and energy. She received with equal indifference the defeat of her bill and the gain of four votes over the preceding year.

The event of the day was, of course, telegraphed to Arden, but, being expected, it did not interfere with the reception of the home-coming delegates. The gain of the four votes was celebrated as a victory, and Millicent, as she stepped from the train, was loudly cheered. But she looked pale and tired, and escaped as quickly as possible from the crowd of welcomers, among whom Hector Frye did not appear. There was no message from him at her house. She called up the *Sentinel* office, and was informed that Mr. Frye had been at home, ill, for two days. At his lodgings a hoarse voice answered her call.

"Hector, is that you? Are you ill? What is the matter?" she cried.

"Oh, nothing—just a cold—nothing serious. Very kind of you to ask," said the voice heavily.

"I am coming round to see you," announced Millicent.

"No, no, don't bother—I'll just get a cab and come round to you."

"No, you won't. They told me at the office that you'd been ill for two days and——"

"Oh, well—I've resigned, that's why. But——"

"Resigned! What do you mean?"

"Why, I've left the paper. I'm going away. I'll be right over, Millicent."

Millicent hung up the receiver, feeling suddenly numb. Resigned—going away! She sat at her desk, staring at the heap of papers before her, till Hector came in. Then she rose and faced

him proudly. But at sight of his pale, haggard face, she ran toward him and put her hands on his shoulders.

"You *are* ill! You didn't let me know! What does it mean?" she cried.

Hector's eyes fell before hers. He took her hands in his, held them a moment gently, and let them go.

"I'm not ill, Millicent."

"But resigning—going away! What do you—"

"Yes, I'm going. Sit down, Millicent—don't be disturbed, dear."

But Millicent remained standing, looking at him painfully.

"I don't understand," she said.

"No, dear—you don't understand," said Hector, with a kind of hopeless patience. "I know it. You don't know how hard it's been for me—that I can't stand it—that I *must* go."

"Do you mean," she asked abruptly, "my not being ready to marry you?"

"Oh, it isn't so much that—though if you had loved me, you would have married me a year ago. It's because—I have loved you so entirely and have so hoped you would love me—and hope deferred maketh the heart sick—and I am heartsick. I can't work or think of anything but you—and you think of anything but me. I want to get free."

Millicent's face hardened.

"I see," she said, in a low voice. "Well—go, then."

"But not in anger. Don't be angry with me, dearest. It isn't your fault that you can't love me—nor mine that I can't bear it any longer. Sit down, won't you, and let me talk—for the last time."

Millicent dropped into the nearest chair.

"I can't believe," she said, "that you would act in this way unless there's something I don't know."

Hector stood near her with his hands on the back of a chair, moving it nervously.

"There *is* something you don't know and that I want to tell you before I go," he said. "But it hasn't anything to do with my going."

Millicent absently took off her big hat.

"I was going out," she said. "I was going down to see Colonel Banford—Hector!" and she looked up at him sharply. "It isn't—hurt vanity that has done this, is it? No, that would be too absurd, and yet, you know, there was something written about me—about *us*—Of course, you saw that thing in the *Times*. It was written to cut both of us—and I intend to find out who did it!" The color was coming back to Millicent's cheeks, and her eyes flashed angrily. "I mean to go and ask that man who wrote it—"

"Millicent," said Hector, standing straight and squaring his shoulders. "I'll save you the trouble. *I* wrote it. That's what I had to tell you."

Seeing that Millicent was speechless, her hands hanging limp by her sides and her eyes fixed, Hector went on:

"I wrote that, and I've been writing for the *Times* for a year. I wrote all the anti-suffrage squibs—every one of them since a year ago. It's a miracle to me that you never suspected me, for often they were written in the very words I've used to you. You've always known that I was half a rebel."

As Millicent still did not speak, but only stared at the floor, Hector continued calmly:

"Of course, I know how it will strike you and that you never will understand it. You will consider me a double-faced impostor and a criminal. You've never wanted to understand any more of me than just what went your way. And yet you must have known that, while I agreed with you logically, I didn't temperamentally, and all the temperamental side of me you have starved, and it takes its revenge, that's all. You can consider this an infidelity—unsatisfied emotion is apt to be unfaithful. I have often felt like smashing everything you were working for, and it was a perfectly legitimate feeling. I often felt like a solemn ass when I wrote the kind of thing you liked, and it was a great pleasure to me to show myself up publicly as such.

"Yes, I thoroughly enjoyed writing those things for the *Times*. It's a wonder to me that I haven't been found

out, but I believe no one knows it except Banford, and he is a good old sport and has a sense of humor, and he's had a lot of fun out of this, and so have I. And you haven't given me much amusement otherwise, Millicent. Of course, you are furious that I should have dared make fun of your ideas—of you—it's *lèse majesté*—but a lover may see the ridiculous side of his mistress and love her none the less. I know you would have preferred me to be a doormat pure and simple, and honestly I tried to be, but I couldn't quite.

"If you want to tell the story of my treason to the sisterhood, you may, of course—they'll sympathize with you. Nobody will sympathize with me—unless it's old Banford. Of course, I didn't take any money from him, you know. He's the only person that will really miss me, I think. Do you mean to say, Millicent, that you could read that 'Parable' and not know I wrote it? Heavens, how blind you are! Didn't the bitterness of disappointment speak to you in every line? Who else could or would have written it? Who else cared enough? Who else loves you, and hates you for your insensibility, and would like to wound you, to beat you—anything to make you *feel*?"

Hector snatched up his hat, looking at her with flaming eyes. Millicent twisted her hands together.

"I know," he said, "that I have hurt you, and that you will never forgive me. You won't think of the thousand times you have hurt me, and without meaning to—that's the sting. Well—it's over now. Don't make another man love you, Millicent—you're a natural celibate. You'll get over my going very soon, especially as old Banford won't be able to bother you as much without me. You only lose a lover that you don't want, but the Cause loses an enemy!"

With this parting gibe, the young man abruptly left the room; and in a daze she heard his cab drive away.

What went on in Millicent's consciousness during the hours of twilight in which she sat motionless where Hector had left her, perhaps remained in-

explicable even to herself. What happened afterward, however, speedily became public property. Arden knew next day that Miss James and Mr. Frye had departed together for a neighboring city, where they were quietly married; and that, after a short absence, Mr. Frye would return to his editorial duties on the *Sentinel*. History might record that after this event the journalistic suffrage war in Arden lost in interest; for as the *Sentinel* gained weight and ardor on the affirmative side, the *Times* became distinctly enfeebled, and though still with a will to bite, might be seen to have lost its teeth.

The Jekyll-and-Hyde part played by Mr. Frye never became known; nor did the influence of his crime on Millicent's imagination. It was certainly not merely the fear of losing him that took her to his lodgings on that night when he had said farewell to her.

The blow that he had dealt her was perhaps the crystallizing force that shook all her vague feeling into definite form. Before that she had been fond of him as a thoroughly known person, good, frank, and honest. But who can gauge the effect of a suddenly discovered chasm in what has seemed firm earth, leading to unknown depths?

Was it a determination on Millicent's part to reclaim her convert, and once for all to assure his shaken loyalty? No, it was a purely personal matter.

She did not want to lose her lover—and not till it came to the point of losing him, perhaps, did she perfectly realize that she wanted him. But this was not all.

There remains the question of his infidelity. And until the effect of such an infidelity—the result, illogical, but certain, of her own coldness, and thus a perverse proof of his love for her—until this problem can be studied out, it will be impossible to know why Millicent, flinging herself into Hector's arms and passionately responsive to him at last, sobbed out, for all explanation of her surrender:

"Hector! I never can trust you again!"



The Romances of Sandy McGrab

BY J. A. R. WYLIE.

Sandy McGrab, a young tailor, one day reciting his beloved Shakespeare, in the hills above his native Kirkcumburgh, is overheard by a young actress, one of a company of obscure traveling players. She recognizes his genius, and announces herself as a fellow professional. Sandy's denial that he is an actor leads her to think that he is the "laird," while he takes her for a famous actress who is expected in the neighborhood. When the truth finally comes out, it serves only to deepen their growing love. Sandy sells his shop to enable her to get to London to keep an engagement upon which her future depends, promising to meet her there to play *Romeo* to her *Juliet*. Then he starts after her on foot.

IV.—THE UNDERSTUDY

THE Avonia Theater was packed.

In the gallery, a once critical, but now enthusiastic, audience sat, crushed together so that the slightest movement aroused indignation, somber glances, and threatening mutterings. Elbowroom was a thing of the past. A very stout gentleman, with the appearance of a retired greengrocer, was the only one who, by sheer weight and ruthless self-importance, was able to applaud comfortably as the curtain fell on the fourth act.

"Well, I've seen Shakespeare in what you might call his prime," he was saying largely to his neighbor. "I've seen Irving and Ellen Terry, but I say give me Rolf Derwent as *Romeo*, and I'll not regret the past. A marvel, that man—a real marvel!"

Sandy McGrab sighed wearily, and tried to find a new place for his aching legs.

"It's *Juliet* I'm thinking of," he said. "You would be," said the large person, and chuckled. "You young fellows

are all for a pretty face, and Mary Elliot's pretty enough; but an old stager like myself wants more than that: He wants Art—Art with a capital A, my boy—and Rolf Derwent is an artist——"

"He's a stick," said Sandy McGrab.

His neighbor turned his head and stared. He perceived a young man with red hair, a gaunt, stubborn-looking profile, a fine pair of shoulders, and shabby apparel that reminded him of a serio-comic Scotch performer he had once heard in a music hall.

"Could act *Romeo* better yourself, I suppose?" the retired greengrocer demanded satirically.

"I could," said Sandy McGrab.

The greengrocer gasped.

"You Scotchmen beat everything!" he remarked.

"We do," said Sandy.

"Well, I'm blowed!" said the greengrocer.

The orchestra ceased its troublings, and the lights began to die out.

"Ye'll be worse than 'blowed,'" said

McGrab softly, "if ye dinna hold your tongue."

After that there was silence. The curtain went up on the gloomy vault of the Capulets, and *Juliet* lay sleeping amidst her flowers. A ray of moonlight from some unimaginable opening fell on her lovely, upturned face, and even the greengrocer caught his breath. Sandy McGrab did not move. Throughout the long, tragic scene his unflinching eyes never left that white-clad figure, and only when *Romeo* broke upon the quiet did his jaw tighten and an ironical, contemptuous smile cross his lips.

"Puir lassie!" he muttered, under his breath.

When the curtain fell for the last time, amidst a thunder of applause, he rose and stood with folded arms, watching the actors as they came forward to bow their acknowledgments. Even when *Juliet*, hand in hand with *Romeo*, appeared before the footlights, he gave no sign. For an instant she waited, smiling faintly and very sweetly at the politely enthusiastic stalls; then her eyes rose to the gallery. There they rested for what seemed a long minute. The smile faded like an obscured sunbeam, then brightened again to a sudden, glad recognition, and in the very midst of it all, even while she stood there, the curtain fell with a jarring, illusion-shattering thump.

"What I think about Shakespeare——" the greengrocer began.

Sandy McGrab pushed past him. He was not rude, but he had a forceful, steam-roller manner that was irresistible, and he was the first to step out into the cool night air. It was raining. A harsh-voiced urchin shrieked the latest news in unintelligible accents, and thrust a moist paper into McGrab's unwilling hand. McGrab, from a mysterious pocket, produced a halfpenny. It was his last, and therefore easy to find.

"I dinna want your paper, ye puir, feckless laddie," he said. "But I'm a happy man to-night, and ye can hae all me possessions. Will ye no tell me what 'Down, Dishes!' means?"

He was referring to the inscription on the yellow, fluttering poster, but the

youth had already shot across under the horses' noses, and McGrab's question was left unanswered. He did not seem to care particularly. The theatergoers jostled him onto the road, and the snorting, impatient motors drove him back onto the pavement, but he still retained his rapt expression of unutterable, triumphant satisfaction.

When some one touched him on the arm, he started and looked down at the small person who had sprung up unexpectedly beside him. He saw at once that she was attractive. She had no hat on, and her dark hair curled rebelliously round a piquant, smiling little face. The plain black dress had been made incredibly frivolous by a dainty lace apron and an indescribable air of mock sobriety.

"Pardon, monsieur," she began, a little breathlessly. "If monsieur would be so kind as to come zis way—— My mistress ask if monsieur will not speak wiz'er a moment——"

"Your mistress?" McGrab interrupted.

"*Certainement*—my mistress, Made-moiselle Eliot, monsieur."

He colored to the roots of his hair.

"Lassie, ye canna be sure it's me she's wanting."

"*Mais, oui, monsieur.* She explained to me. 'Nanette,' she say, 'you will find 'im standing on ze pavement, dreaming. 'E will be dressed like no one else you 'ave ever seen, and 'e will be ze only 'ansome man in ze crowd.' I saw you at once. It is not possible I 'ave made a mistake, monsieur?"

Her eyes twinkled up at him with malicious interrogation, and McGrab shook his head.

"I canna think but ye are right," he said. "I will come at once."

He followed her down dark, winding little passages. There was a sharp rap at a door, the answer of a familiar voice, and the next minute he found himself in a little room that, at first glance, seemed made of mirrors. *Juliet* was seated before one of them—only she was not *Juliet* any more. She had discarded the burial shroud, and wore something wonderful in gold-and-black

brocade, which left bare the white shoulders and seemed to catch in its rich folds glints of her hair's radiance. The powder had been brushed from her cheeks, and, as she turned, their soft color deepened.

"Sandy McGrab," she said gently.

He bent over her outstretched hand and kissed it. The action became him. It brightened the tarnished silver of his buckled shoes, and brought back the colors to his travel-stained kilt. Prince Charlie stepping out of the frame of some old picture could not have cut a more gallant figure. Miss Eliot smiled upon him.

"Sandy McGrab!" she repeated, and this time there was something more than pleasure in her voice—a quick, involuntary relief. "Laird!" she added, with a touch of joyous mockery.

Nanette went out and discreetly closed the door.

Sandy McGrab drew himself up, and his hand dropped to his side.

"I'm no laird," he said. "Ye ken that well eno', fairy-tale princess."

"And I'm no fairy-tale princess," she answered back.

"You are to me."

"And to me you are the laird." She looked at him from under half-closed lids. "Do you know, to-night, while I was lying on my bier, I thought of the moors and the heather-covered hills of Glen Every, and of Sandy McGrab, and of the hours I had spent with him and Will Shakespeare? Do you remember?"

"I'm always remembering," he answered simply.

"How sweet of you! I thought of it so much that when I looked up at the gallery, it seemed quite natural that you should be there. I recognized you at once among all these funny men—and—and I was so glad!" She laughed a little, and her voice steadied. "Won't you sit down, Mr. McGrab?" she asked primly.

Sandy McGrab chose the most reliable looking of the fragile gold-and-white chairs. He sat opposite her, and her eyes rested on him with grave satisfaction.

"It's like a breath of fresh air to have you," she said.

"Ye'll be needing a little fresh air, princess," he answered.

"You mean I'm pale? Yes—it's fatigue—and—and the anxiety of it all. But I acted all right?"

"Ye were grand," he answered, "but no so grand as ye were up at the glen when ye played *Juliet* from the laird's balcony."

"I hadn't got you to act with me. Derwent can't act."

"No," McGrab admitted. "He knows his Shakespeare like a bairn. He's a stick."

"And a scoun——"

She broke off hastily, and there was a moment's silence. For the first time she was noticing the man's hollow cheeks and threadbare clothes.

"You've not set the Thames on fire yet, laird?" she asked, at last.

He shook his head.

"Not yet, princess."

"But you will?"

"Yes."

"And then?" she demanded quizzically.

He did not answer, but he looked at her, and Mary Eliot turned her attention suddenly to the looking-glass.

"I wish I could help you, Sandy McGrab," she said dreamily. "Sometimes I build fairy castles, and my favorite one is that I have a theater all of my own and that I send to my manager and say: 'Find me one Sandy McGrab, and let him act *Romeo* to my *Juliet*. He's the only man living who can.' And it all comes true—in my dream—and we two are famous together. But it's only a dream. I can't help myself—or any one."

"I dinna want help," he said stubbornly; and then, with a quick change of tone: "You're no crying, princess?"

She brushed her hand impatiently over her eyes.

"No, I'm not—not really. But I'm so helpless—so alone. It's not all fun—this life, Sandy McGrab. It's not easy for a woman who springs suddenly to the top of the tree, as I did. She has so much to fight—and sometimes I'm

afraid— You don't understand all the jealousy, and spite, and hatred—”

“Hatred?” he interrupted almost roughly. “Who dares hate you?”

“Oh, lots of people—Derwent for one. And there's my understudy, Edith Wharton. She thinks I'm doing her out of her big chance—perhaps I am. And Derwent's mad about her. Sometimes I feel them both plotting and scheming against me. If they could get me out of my part for a single night, they think they'd do for me. I'm popular, but I'm not ‘established.’ Another's triumph would easily swamp mine—and I'd just drop out—forgotten.” She tried to laugh. “I'm fighting for my existence against a dozen unseen enemies,” she said. “And that's why I'm so glad to see you, Sandy McGrab. You seem to me to-night the only one I can trust.”

She got up wearily and drew her silk cloak about her. Sandy McGrab stood at her side, a grim, rather overpowering figure in the tiny room.

“Ye're going now, princess?”

“I've got to. It's a big supper party at the Française. All the company will be there. I daren't stay away. Even there, I shall have to fight. I hear there's a strike of waiters on, so it may be amusing.” She glanced at him over her shoulder with a touch of her old gayety. “Will you be there to wait on me, my Scottish cavalier?” she asked.

“It's no such a bad idea,” he answered gravely.

The door opened slowly, and at the same time with a sufficiency of discreet noise.

“Mademoiselle's taxi auto awaits her,” said Nanette demurely.

“Good night, then, Sandy McGrab.” Once more the small hand rested in his. “Perhaps we shall meet again—one day.”

“Maybe,” he answered.

“Good luck, laird!”

“Good luck, princess!”

She was gone, amidst a soft rustle of silks and brocades. Sandy McGrab lingered. He gazed thoughtfully at the silver-backed brushes, at the hundred and one mysteries shut away in delicate little boxes. There was a faded flower

lying on the table. Sandy McGrab picked it up with an air of absent-minded detachment, and then slipped it surreptitiously into the breast of his jacket, to join an unrecognizable piece of heather.

He did not tip Nanette as he went out, but he bowed to her gravely, and Nanette curtsied to him with quite exceptional amiability.

He was very handsome, *ce monsieur écossais*, and since he was so poor, he must certainly be a lord, she thought.

II.

Hadley, manager of the Avonia Theater, sat at the head of a beautifully spread table, and the members of his company, clustered around him, were like plants under the warm rays of a beneficent sun. For Hadley was a great man, on whose capricious geniality much depended. And this evening was propitious. The house had been sold out, and on such occasions tactful souls had been known to mount high and less heedful people to sink low, Hadley's good humor being usually marked by spasms of irritability.

At the long table there was only one empty chair, and that was on Hadley's right. Rolf Derwent, who sat opposite it, smiled across and then glanced down to where a dark-haired woman sat restlessly playing with her bread.

“Are we waiting for any one?” he asked pleasantly.

Hadley started and frowned.

“For Miss Eliot,” he said. “I don't know what has become of her.”

“I expect,” Derwent returned, with smooth deliberation, “that she is merely late. It is the privilege of greatness to be late, is it not?”

Hadley's frown deepened.

“She's not as great as all that,” he said. “I'm not accustomed to being kept waiting. Here, maitre, dinner can be served at once, do you hear?”

Monsieur Géraud, of the Française, advanced with extended hands of apology.

If monsieur would only excuse—just a few little minutes longer. There had

been great trouble. At the last moment the waiters—*scélérats*, all of zem—had refused to work. Zey had asked impossibilities, and zey 'ad gone. At this very moment he, Monsieur Géraud, was engaging fresh forces; rough hands, no doubt, but monsieur would excuse? Ze chef remained, as monsieur knew, ze best chef in London—

Hadley laughed.

"As long as your cook hasn't bolted, I don't care," he said. "We'll do the serving ourselves, if the worst comes to the worst. See that your new forces don't bolt with our belongings, though; that's all."

There was a general laugh, and in the midst of it Mary Eliot entered. For an instant she stood in the open doorway, looking shyly down the length of the table, then, as some one called her by name, came forward to her place. There had been a little exclamation of welcome, but beneath its effusiveness she thought she caught a note of hostility. It was, perhaps, inevitable. Many of those who greeted her had fought bitterly for her success, and had become bitter. And there was at least one who waited a chance to snatch that success from her and keep it.

Edith Wharton looked up and smiled across at her.

"Punctual at business, unpunctual at pleasure!" she said mockingly. "How admirable! Miss Eliot, I wager you'd never be late for a performance, would you?"

"She'd better try!" Hadley cut in roughly; and then he laughed. "That would suit your book, though, wouldn't it? What's the contract say? One performance missed, and you two alternate, eh? You'd better not keep me waiting at the theater, Miss Eliot, or your glory will be shared."

"Shared?" echoed Derwent, in his suave way. "Is that possible?"

He bowed to Mary Eliot, but his eyes wandered down the table. The action lent his well-cut face an expression that was not wholly agreeable, and that seemed mysteriously to accentuate the trace of coarseness about the mouth and nostrils. *Matinée* ladies were wont to

call Rolf Derwent "almost beautiful," but then, as *Romeo*, he had never exhibited to them all the subtleties of face play of which he was capable.

Mary Eliot did not answer him. She sat quietly at Hadley's right hand, her eyes bright with an instinctive defiance. She knew now for certain that the atmosphere around her was hostile. Hadley did not speak to her. She knew that his *amour propre* was hurt, and that a skillfully flattering word would heal the wound, but she could not speak it. She was fighting, perhaps, for her professional existence, and could not use the weapons of her profession.

The first course was served almost in silence. Then Derwent leaned forward again. He held a wineglass toward her.

"To the risen star!" he said. Then he smiled again down the table, and lifted his glass a little higher: "To the rising star!" he finished lightly.

Hadley exclaimed with a somewhat spiteful "Bravo!" and Derwent put the glass to his lips. The next moment it lay in pieces on the table, and a pale stream of wine trickled across the cloth.

"Clumsy fool!" Derwent burst out furiously.

The culprit, evidently one of Géraud's hastily recruited forces, mumbled an apology. Mary Eliot glanced up. She saw at first nothing but a very big and red-haired man arrayed in a shabby suit of evening clothes that were a size too small for him. Then she smothered a gasp and stared at her plate.

"Clumsy fool!" Derwent reiterated peevishly, as the wine trickled onto his knee.

The "clumsy fool" completed his task of mopping up the disaster and disappeared. He came back a moment later with a fresh dish, which he offered to Miss Eliot first.

"Sandy McGrab," she whispered faintly. "Sandy McGrab—for Heaven's sake— The other side, you duffer!"

He obeyed. His hand shook, and the fork slipped cheerfully into the gravy.

"I'm no used to this sort of thing," he muttered.

"I should think not! How did you come here?"

"I beg your pardon?" her neighbor apologized.

"I was only asking the waiter for a clean fork," Mary Eliot explained glibly.

"I just came and offered myself," said Sandy McGrab in the other ear. "Some one had to look after you."

Mary Eliot smiled to herself. Suddenly she felt very much comforted. She was no longer quite so much alone, and the chill atmosphere was warmed by something ardent and sincere, giving her a new courage, a new energy. She lifted her head, and met Edith Wharton's curious, antagonistic eyes with a smiling self-confidence.

"You seem very happy to-night," Derwent remarked, almost with irritation.

"I am happy," she admitted. "I met an old friend at the theater—a very dear friend—and the surprise has made me pleased with the whole world. Do you object?"

"On the contrary. Might one ask the privileged one's name?"

She met the veiled impertinence with steady eyes.

"You would not be much the wiser if I told you. No one knows him yet, but one day he will be famous. He is a great actor."

"Indeed!"

"He can act *Romeo* better than any man living," she added innocently.

Derwent flushed crimson, and Hadley laughed. If there was one thing he enjoyed more than another, it was seeing some one discomfited. At that moment Sandy McGrab offered Miss Eliot the potatoes for the third time in rapid succession.

"You're just grand!" he whispered. "Just grand!"

"And you"—she smiled to herself—"you're the worst waiter in the kingdom, Sandy McGrab. But you look a gentleman, even when you're dressed like one."

"For Heaven's sake, take these potatoes away!" Hadley burst out, adding,

with angry conviction: "The man's drunk!"

Sandy McGrab and the potatoes withdrew. But Mary Eliot felt the Scotsman's presence all through the long and ponderous meal. Whenever she met the watchful glances of her vis-à-vis, it seemed to her that the next moment Sandy McGrab was there, a large air of protection about his carriage, his stubborn head held high with a dignity that a mere misfit in coats could not diminish. Yet her sense of something impending, something threatening, left her no peace. She feigned an extreme fatigue and rose early from the table. Hadley nodded at her, still sulky, but with an appreciative eye that no amount of personal prejudice could dim. Mary Eliot was a beautiful woman and a great actress, and these things meant packed theaters, dearer to his soul even than his vanity.

"I dare say you're right," he said. "We're all tired out, and to-morrow night we have the German emperor to cater for. You'd better get all the sleep you can, ladies."

Mary Eliot smiled.

"I prefer fresh air," she said lightly. "A friend has lent me a car for the day, and I shall see what a breath from the sea will do for me."

"Beware of breakdowns, then!" Hadley adjured. "We want no trouble to-morrow."

"I shall see to that. Good night—every one."

With an effort, Hadley recovered his good manners. He rose to accompany her to the vestibule, and the three other men followed his example. But at the door, Derwent dropped behind, as if by accident, hesitated, and finally came back to the table.

There Edith Wharton had resumed a pose of childish ill humor. One hand supported her chin, the other toyed with a costly bracelet which, in a fit of restlessness, she had detached from her wrist and flung upon the table. She refused to look up as Derwent came to her side.

At the other end of the private dining room, the waiter with the red hair was

slowly and ponderously removing the last traces of the festivity.

"Well?" Derwent inquired, in an undertone.

She shrugged her shoulders at him.

"She wipes the earth with both of us," she flared out. "You, being a man, seem to enjoy the process. It amuses you to be laughed at, to be walked over, by her serene highness. You take it all lying down——"

"Do I?" he interjected.

"Well—don't you?"

She looked at him now, aroused in spite of herself from a sullen anger to curiosity. Derwent seated himself quickly beside her.

"I don't," he said. "But I'm a trifle more subtle than you think—that's all. I hate that fair-haired upstart as much—well, as much as I love you——"

"Thank you," she interrupted insolently. "I don't want to hear that sort of thing now."

"I know you don't. I was merely giving you the measure of my own personal resentment. I was also giving you a reason for what I shall do. Look here—what will you give me if you play *Juliet* to-morrow night?"

She turned and looked him full in the face, the thought coarsening her florid beauty with a dull flush of excitement.

"Give you?" she echoed, catching her breath. "I—I don't know. Anything."

"Will you marry me?"

She nodded, and then laughed suddenly.

"Yes—by Heaven, I'd marry the devil himself for that! It's a promise, Rolf."

"Thank you. You might have made it more flattering, but I understand."

He glanced swiftly over his shoulder at the curtained doorway of the vestibule. They could hear Hadley chuckling hugely over one of his own jokes and Mary Eliot's lighthearted answer. The red-haired waiter clattered stupidly with the plates.

"Hadley's in a queer mood," Derwent continued. "It's all touch and go with him. His protégée of to-day may be the victim of to-morrow. It's only nerves, of course, but we've got to reckon with

them all the same. There's one thing sure: He's out for birthday honors, and to-morrow night's gala show is his chance—and ours."

"I don't see——" she began hurriedly.

He laid his hand on hers.

"My dear girl, it's just this: The man or woman who helps Hadley to glory on such an occasion is made. It may be Mary Eliot, or it may be your humble servant—or it might be you."

"Still I don't follow. Mary Eliot will play to-morrow night if she's alive—if it's only to spite me."

"No, she won't."

"Who's to prevent her?"

"I am. I'm going to try, anyhow. It flashed across my mind this evening. I know whose car she's using to-morrow. It's Mrs. Waybon's, and Mrs. Waybon's chauffeur used to drive me. I've given him seats for the theater, and we're rather good friends. Aren't you beginning to see? Mrs. Waybon's car is going to have a breakdown ten miles from anywhere. At seven o'clock Hadley will be foaming at the mouth; at eight, Miss Edith Wharton steps into the breach; at eleven London is talking of the new star; and the next morning Miss Mary Eliot gets her *congé*——"

"You daren't do it——"

"Yes, I dare. And if you're wise, you'll look up Nanette to-morrow morning early. You'll give her a large *douceur*, and see that she has everything ready for you to-morrow night. Take her into your confidence, if needs must. She'll go where the money is, and she knows Hadley won't give twopence for a just and true account of how some one got him into a fix." Derwent sat back in his chair with a movement of satisfaction. "I think that will about square my account," he said. "Miss Eliot won't have another opportunity to compare my *Romeo* with that confounded unknown fool of hers——"

Edith Wharton burst out laughing.

"So it's wounded vanity, after all? Well, who cares, as long as we both get what we want? It's a bargain, *mon ami*. To our good luck!"

They touched glasses. At that mo-

ment Hadley reappeared with his companions, Monsieur Géraud bringing up the rear with many eager, complimentary gestures. On perceiving the new waiter still fumbling with the dishes, he gave vent to a passionate sigh of despair.

"*Mais voyons, imbécile*, do you stand zere ze 'ole night doing nozing? Away wiz you! Coffee for ze lady, liqueurs also for ze gentlemen, and endeavor to forget you are a big lout of a Scotchman. *Allons!*"

The red-headed waiter drew himself up, and measured his insulter. Then suddenly he seemed to remember something of greater importance, and, without a word, disappeared behind the curtains. But he did not fetch the coffee. Instead, he hurried to the waiters' dressing room, snatched down a worn-looking plaid from a peg, flung it about his medieval evening suit, troubadour fashion, to this romantic costume added a tam-o'-shanter, and left the restaurant by a back entrance, slamming the door after him.

III.

The Waybons' car stood against the curb of a quiet West End street, and Nanette, laden with furs, stood on the curb and talked to the Waybon chauffeur. She was looking very pretty that morning, and the chauffeur's attitude was confidential, his expression tender.

"You can just go ahead and name the day, Nan," he was saying; "just as soon as you can fix it up. You might do worse, my girl."

"*Mon Dieu*, marry an Englishman!" exclaimed Nanette, with coquettish disgust.

"Well, why not? I can drive a car as well as any bloomin' froggie. And, look 'ere!" He took a slip of paper from his pocket, and held it triumphantly under her nose. "How about that, eh? Fifty quid, and a bit more if things come off. Enough to start us off as fine as you please, and a bit over for a week-end spree. Come on! Say the word."

Nanette looked at the check, then she looked up at the chauffeur, with her head at a wise and knowing angle.

"You 'ave not 'ad that for driving ze motor, George," she said conclusively.

"For not drivin' it," said George, with a suppressed grin.

"I see." She smoothed a curl from her forehead. "P'r'aps," she said softly, "p'r'aps zere will be a leetle accident on ze road. Is it not so?"

They looked at each other in questioning, uncertain silence. George bent down to her.

"Look 'ere," he said sharply, "are you in the know?"

She nodded.

"I 'ave guessed. I also 'ave 'ad a leetle present." She shrugged her shoulders. "It is perhaps what you would call a low, underneath trick; but —*que voulez-vous?* One must live, one must take what ze *bon Dieu* offers and not ask too many questions."

"'Ear! 'Ear!" said George, with enthusiasm.

"Where will it be?" Nanette inquired.

"Ah, now you're askin'! Just 'alfway between Worston and Hilton, me little car will 'ave a 'orrid attack of hindigestion, and for two bloomin' hours I shall be doctorin' up 'er inside and cursin' like mad." He chuckled. "And there ain't a station or a village within five miles," he added cheerfully.

"*Ma pauvre mademoiselle!*" said Nanette regretfully.

At that moment, the front door of the house outside which they waited opened a little wider, and Miss Mary Eliot came down the steps. Last night's weariness had left no trace on her fresh, young beauty, and an old gentleman and an errand boy stopped involuntarily and glanced back, moved by the same instinctive pleasure.

"And remember, George," said Miss Eliot, as she stepped into the waiting car, "we must be back at three o'clock at all costs. You must run no risks."

George touched his cap. The Mercèdes purred expectantly. Nanette curtsied.

"Good-by, Nanette. Have everything ready!"

"*Certainement. Bon voyage, mademoiselle!*"

The Mercèdes glided smoothly for-

ward. Nanette waited until it had disappeared round the corner. Then she went back into the house and into her mistress' dressing room.

At midday she was trying on Miss Eliot's latest purchase from a Bond Street dressmaker, and singing to herself, when the doorbell rang violently. Nanette frowned displeasure. She did not hurry, and it was not till the noise began to get on her nerves that she deigned to answer the summons. Then she uttered a smothered exclamation.

"Monsieur!" she said, and held the door wide open.

Sandy McGrab burst in like a gust of a long-thwarted north wind.

"Yes, it's me," he said, fiercely ungrammatical. "Where's your mistress?"

Nanette stared, and then smiled. He had not changed his costume of the previous evening, and his appearance was accordingly unusual. But he was, for all that, by no means ill to look on, and Nanette had an eye for a man.

"My mistress 'as gone, monsieur," she answered demurely.

"Where?"

"'Ow should I know, monsieur?"

McGrab made no answer for a moment. He was looking all around the room, noting all its graceful feminine details with eager, sunken eyes, and once he passed his hand over his forehead. Nanette saw that it trembled.

"Monsieur is ill?" she asked solicitously.

"No, no; but I hae been up all night looking for you. I only got your address this morning fra the theater, or I should hae been here before." He turned to her with a sudden appeal. "Lassie," he said, "where's your mistress?"

"I 'ave told monsieur, I do not know."

He interrupted her with a stern gesture.

"Ye ken well eno'. You are in the plot—and you are going to tell me."

"Monsieur—I shall do nozing of ze kind."

"Then ye *do* ken where she is?"

Nanette felt the angry tears rise.

"And if I did, I would not tell you," she said.

"You will tell me!" said Sandy McGrab.

"'Ow do you know zat?" she retorted.

"Because I ken a true woman when I see one," said Sandy McGrab, with beautiful conviction.

Nanette gasped at him. He stood before her, broad of shoulder, splendid in carriage, his head thrown back, a curious, but wholly pleasing, figure of a man. Nanette clutched involuntarily at the *douceur* hidden in the bosom of her dress. "Ye will tell me," McGrab went on, "because ye canna do such a mean, dastardly thing as ye are trying to do now. Ye canna do it, lassie. No one with so sweet a face could be so bad at heart. And ye love your mistress—ye maun love her—ye couldna help yourself. If she is not back in time to-night, she is ruined. I ken ye hae not thought of that?"

She could only stare at him. She had thought of it—quite clearly and callously, but then she had not had his fiery, pleading eyes on her.

"What is my mistress to you, monsieur?" she asked defiantly.

"Nothing—but I love her," he answered, so simply and ardently that the tears sprang to Nanette's eyes—she did not know why. She made a determined effort to remain cool and businesslike.

"What will monsieur give me if I tell him?"

"I can give ye nothing—but ye will keep your honor, lassie." And then Sandy McGrab had an inspiration. He laid his big, shapely hand on her shoulder. "I love her so much," he said. "Ye ken what it is to love. Ye'll no do it against me, lassie?"

Nanette shrugged her shoulders. She waited to say something flippant—she cried openly instead.

"Mademoiselle 'as gone to Eastlake."

"Where will the car break down?" he persisted.

"Be—tween Worston and Hilton," she sobbed.

Sandy McGrab looked on her with helpless remorse.

"Ye mustna cry, lassie; I canna bear it. It's no so bad as all that. We'll get

her back safe and sound in time—no fear.”

He patted her, and Nanette wept, with her head on his shoulder. It was not, perhaps, quite usual, but then neither Sandy McGrab nor the circumstances were usual, and there was something large and comforting and brotherly about the man that was irresistible.

“I maun go,” he said gently. “We hae not a minute to lose—” He got as far as the door when he looked back. The light and color had suddenly gone out of his face. “I—I had forgotten,” he said brokenly. “I haven’t a bawbee in the world.”

Nanette had no idea what a bawbee might be, but she guessed his meaning. It may sound very incredible, but this is exactly what happened: She took out her *douceur* and thrust it into Sandy McGrab’s hand.

“May all the saints help you both, monsieur!” she said huskily.

“God bless you!” said Sandy McGrab, and kissed her.

He raced down the stairs.

Mademoiselle Nanette went back into the dressing room. She dried her eyes and powdered her nose, and then she began to sing again—even more cheerily than before.

IV.

The Mercedes hummed its way merrily along the highroad, and Miss Mary Eliot, seated comfortably amid the cushions, watched the sun sink behind the hills, and built castles out of rose-tinted clouds. She was feeling very happy, curiously elated. The fresh country air had given her a joyous energy, and there was something else hidden at the back of her mind—a something that she did not care to analyze, but that glowed and shone like a comforting, cheery, little fire. One of the castles that she built concerned that same evening. She imagined a great, sweeping triumph for herself. The emperor had sent for her and congratulated her. Hadley had offered her a magnificent engagement. And she had turned and said to him:

“I will agree to anything you like, but

first you must give Sandy McGrab his chance—Sandy McGrab, who is the greatest actor in all England—”

And just then, right in the middle of her dreams, something happened. There was a jar, a jerk, and a grunt, and the Mercedes hummed no more. It stopped. The chauffeur looked back over his shoulder, and mumbled something. For some minutes he disappeared under the car, and Mary Eliot glanced at her watch. They had still two hours, and she went on dreaming until the chauffeur’s face, much blackened, appeared over the side.

“Sorry, miss, there’s something wrong with the spark. If you’d not mind getting out a moment, I’ve some tools under the seat.”

Mary Eliot rose reluctantly.

“How long will it be?”

“I don’t rightly know.” He gave her a long and gloomily technical explanation of his difficulties. “It’s a longish business, miss. It might run to an hour or two.”

She gave no sign of the deadly faintness that gripped suddenly at her heart. She looked at him steadily.

“How far are we from the nearest station?”

“A matter of ten miles, miss.”

“Then—then we can’t do it?”

“Sorry, miss. It’s not my fault—”

“Do the best you can.”

She turned away from him, and stood gazing over the long stretch of empty country to the sunset. But the clouds were no longer rose-tinted. They were black and storm-threatening. She did not cry. Even to herself she would not show the white feather, but there was an immense, burning bitterness in her heart. It had been her chance—and perhaps his chance—and it was being snatched from her at the last hour. It seemed to her that Fate grinned mockingly at her from out of the melancholy dusk.

“Oh, Sandy McGrab!” she whispered dully. “Sandy McGrab!”

She did not know that she was appealing to him, claiming the help of a man who himself was no better off, no more capable of helping, than the poor-

est beggar. But she repeated his name in her heart with a passionate insistency. And suddenly, like the magic realization of a dream, he was there; disheveled, breathless, hatless, in that setting of peaceful country his apparel the more hopelessly ludicrous, but for all that a Titan to the rescue—a very Lohengrin.

There was small ceremony about what happened then. A great many things that usually take days of long consideration and explanation were passed over. She uttered a low explanation of incredulous relief, and flung herself into his arms. Sandy McGrab kissed her. The chauffeur stared at them both in anxious curiosity. But not for long. Sandy McGrab put Miss Eliot gently to one side. He came across the road and took the uneasy mechanician by the neck and shook him backward and forward as a mastiff shakes a rat.

"You infernal scoundrel of an Englishman!" he said. "If ye do no hae that machine going in five minutes, I'll shake the miserable bit of life ye hae out of ye."

George gasped.

"It's the sparking, sir——"

"I dinna care what it is. I ken the whole damnable plot, and if we are not off in those five minutes, ye'll wish ye had never been born!"

George looked at him with starting eyes of terror.

"But it's true, sir," he said. "The sparking is wrong—and—and I left my tools behind."

He stood there waiting for death, but McGrab let go his hold. He looked at Mary Eliot, and saw that a wan smile passed over her face.

"It's no good, Sandy McGrab," she said wearily. "You're wonderful, but you're too late. We've just got to make up our minds——"

"What's that?" he interrupted curtly.

He was pointing out across the country. Something that looked like a long snake of light was gliding swiftly toward them through the dusk. It disappeared an instant—reappeared again. Sandy McGrab gripped the chauffeur by the arm, and his grip hurt.

"What's that?" he repeated from behind set teeth.

"I—I don't know, sir. The London Express, maybe—— It's near time."

"Where are the tracks?"

"A few yards ahead, sir——"

"Then, if ye value your life, ye'll do as I tell ye—quick!"

He set his great shoulders to the body of the car. At that moment his strength was something superb to watch. The Mercedes glided forward, and it was at the run that the two men brought her to within a yard of the crossing. Sandy McGrab pushed back the mechanical closing gates as if the force of the car had driven them open.

"It would hae been nearly a grand accident if it were true!" he soliloquized. Then he wrenched off one of the car's side lamps, and raced like a madman right between the lines toward the oncoming express.

"Sandy McGrab—for my sake——"

Mary Eliot called in vain. He was out of hearing. She could see his lamp rise and fall in the darkness like a wild, quixotic will-o'-the-wisp rushing full tilt at some snorting, roaring dragon of fairy legend. Just at that moment Mary Eliot cared nothing for triumph or for glory. There seemed only one thing that mattered—and that the something at the back of her mind, at the bottom of her heart—her love.

"If he is killed——" she thought.

George beside her clenched his chattering teeth.

"It was the money," he moaned. "It makes bloomin' scoundrels of the best of us. If you'd only forgive me, miss?"

She nodded an impatient, agonized assent. Something had happened. The will-o'-the-wisp and the dragon were almost on top of each other—the will-o'-the-wisp faded into the dragon's greater brightness. But the dragon had ceased to snort and roar. It stood still, as if cogitating over its murderous success. Voices came through the darkness. The will-o'-the-wisp reappeared and raced back. A minute later Sandy McGrab and an excited guard were at Mary Eliot's side. The guard looked at the car and then at the lady.

"Well, that was a near squeak," he admitted. "You can thank your lucky stars, madam, your husband stopped us in time. He says you're feelin' a bit queer—and no wonder! If you'd like to come aboard, we'll be in London in half an hour. But you'll have to hurry. We're overdue as it is."

Sandy McGrab gave her no chance to answer. He picked her up and carried her like a child.

It was nine o'clock. Rolf Derwent put the finishing touches to his make-up and smiled to himself in the glass. Edith Wharton had just gone to Mary Eliot's dressing room, ordered there by an infuriated Hadley. Derwent had met her on the way back from his first scene, and she had kissed him in silent triumph. Their next meeting would be on the stage in the house of Capulet. Derwent was going over his first lines when the door opened. He turned swiftly and angrily, and then gasped. The man who stood before him was vaguely familiar. The door closed sharply.

"My name is Sandy McGrab," said the stranger deliberately. "I was waiter last night at the Française, Mr. Derwent, and I overheard things. I hae come to tell you that Miss Eliot has just arrived, and has taken over her part, and I hae come to thrash the life out of ye—"

Derwent made a dive for the bell. He was stopped halfway by a stinging blow between the eyes, and when he got up again, he knew that he was lost.

"You infernal scoundrel!" he stutered. "You've disfigured me—I shan't be able to play—"

"No, you won't," McGrab admitted; "but I shall." He rang the bell. "And if you move or protest, I'll tell the world the whole story. You can choose. And when you hae chosen, you can take off the things and help me dress."

The call boy answered the summons. "Your turn in ten minutes, sir," he shouted through the closed door.

"Very well. Tell Mr. Hadley that Mr. Derwent is very ill and that his part has been taken over by his special understudy, Mr. McGrab. He had better

make the announcement to the audience. Do you understand?"

"Y-es—sir," came the dubious answer.

McGrab turned to his cowering companion.

"Hae ye chosen?" he asked.

"It's blackmail," Derwent declared hoarsely.

"I don't care what it is," said McGrab, unperturbed. "If ye like to go on the stage with that face, ye are at liberty to do so."

"Damn you!" said Derwent ferociously.

Hadley came raging to the dressing-room door just as Sandy McGrab came out of it. Derwent's gorgeous costume fitted him excellently well, though there was a tightness about the shoulders which the cloak covered. He wore no wig and practically no make-up, and Hadley's jaw dropped.

"Who the devil—" he began, "and what the devil—"

McGrab pushed him firmly to one side.

"If ye want the devil, ye'll find him behind there in the dressing room, but I advise ye to get to the front, sir. Ye're going to see 'Romeo and Juliet' for the first time."

Two minutes later the audience of the Avonia caught its breath. They had seen many *Romeos*—melancholy *Romeos*, romantic *Romeos*, handsome and plain *Romeos*—but never a one with red hair and a figure that must have measured six feet one if it measured an inch. When he uttered his first lines, they nearly lost their well-bred indifference. They nearly laughed. For the Italian nobleman had, besides red hair, a faint, musical Scotch accent. But, as in that gay crowd of Capulets' guests *Romeo* first caught sight of *Juliet*, the desire to laugh suddenly passed. It passed with the instinctive recognition of greatness. The whole audience was lifted out of the theater, above superficialities. This was no play, this was not an actor; it was real life, and this man was *Romeo*.

"Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night."

The words might have been spoken for the first time; those who heard them felt that they were at least uttered with a sincerity, a fire of inspiration that gave them new life and meaning. The most jaded, most weary theatergoer sat up to listen. McGrab did not fail them. At the first meeting between *Romeo* and *Juliet*, both actor and actress held them spellbound. *Juliet's* swift surprise, *Romeo's* movement of ardent admiration and devotion were magnificently spontaneous. So, too, was *Juliet's* fortunately unheard exclamation.

"Sandy McGrab!" she whispered. "Sandy McGrab!"

"It's our chance!" he whispered back, and then caught up his own lines with a confidence and a passion that carried the listeners through the scene on a high wave of enthusiasm.

As the curtain fell, the applause was continuous. Edith Wharton and Derwent had left the theater. Hadley had ceased cursing. He gazed at Sandy Mc-

Grab with a wondering, appreciative eye. But he said nothing.

At the end of the evening, after what the papers described as "the most dramatic and remarkable performance of the season," *Romeo* and *Juliet* stood hand in hand in the wings, waiting to answer the repeated calls. They behaved with a blissful disregard for their surroundings that is typical of the very young and the very happy. It was thus Hadley came upon them. He carried himself like a frigate under full sail.

"You are made, both of you!" he cried, and struck McGrab on the shoulder. "I don't care a dollar who you are, sir, but you're a genius. The emperor has conferred the Order of the Red Eagle upon me. And—and"—with a gust of graciousness—"he has sent for both of you."

But *Romeo* and *Juliet* only looked at each other and smiled.

For there are times when even German emperors do not count.



I DID NOT KNOW

I DID not know that love could be so dear,
And sweet and innocent.
I always thought it was some flaming thing,
Red and magnificent.

It was as if my heart, a-wandering
Superb and without care,
Through hothouse blooms of love, all fragrant hued,
Had found a wild rose there.

Clear-eyed and wonderful, my dreams came back
With old-time fantasies;
Of country paths beside deep clover fields
And gnarled old trysting trees.

I did not know that love could be so dear,
And sweet and innocent.
I always thought it was some flaming thing,
Red and magnificent.

GLAD MADONE.



THE MONEY MACHINE

C. HILTON-TURVEY

SHE went softly down the corridor, a sumptuous woman in luxurious surroundings. Her rich gray dress trailed after her on the Persian pile, like a filmy cloud across a somber sunset.

When she reached the door at the end, she paused, her hand on the knob, her face averted, as one shrinking from an ordeal.

After a moment, she opened the door and went in, closing it noiselessly behind her.

The room was in semi-darkness. The chill of a November afternoon hung in the air, unrelieved by fire. After the warmth of the corridor, it felt repellent.

Even in the dim light, the room had the appearance of impersonal order. The canopied bed loomed up from the shadows. The pillows had been removed. The woman's eyes dropped to the sheeted figure that lay there, which had been, twenty-four hours before, Ansel Gage—the man whose name she bore.

Slowly she crossed the room and sank into a chair beside the bed.

Her mind was still awhirl with the terrific speed of her journey from the country house of a friend. The powerful car had hurled itself along the roads till the brown fields behind their silver-gray fences, the red-roofed farms, the yellow clay underwheel, had blurred with the speed of the flight.

But Death, soft-footed and sure, had won the race.

She had risen from the bridge table at the summons. Her mind kept straying back to the cards she had held—an exceptionally good hand! She chided herself for regretting the interruption—and the next moment found herself planning how she best might have managed the cards.

But Death had been playing another hazard, and—he had won.

She stirred uneasily. She was a very conventional woman. Her social tact was perfect. She was seldom at a loss. But the strangeness of the present situation began to trouble her.

What did one do? A scene from a play flashed before her. The heroine had thrown herself prone beside the body of the man she loved, had clung to it, and sobbed out her grief—her love—her wish to die. How different real life was from its stage portrayal! Mrs. Gage bit her lip to suppress a smile. She could hardly imagine any sensible person going through such an emotional debauch. Yet she had leaned forward, silent and tense with the rest of the audience, glad that the house was darkened. Such a contradictory thing is human nature!

What *did* one do—left alone with one's dead? There must be some polite formula, some satisfactory procedure.

At the funeral of one's social friends, the matter was simple—a note of condolence, an order to the florist, a graceful progress across the crowded room, a bend of one's head over the flower-enshrined coffin, a dab at one's eyes, a

subdued word of regret as one sank into the nearest seat. Could anything be easier?

The living Ansel Gage had slipped in and out of the great house day after day, quiet, unobtrusive, aloof. Now, lying dead beneath his sheet, he embarrassed her beyond measure. Her loosely clasped hands began to tense themselves one upon the other. Her suede slipper tapped the floor.

Some one opened the door a crack. "Mother!" whispered a voice through it.

Mrs. Gage rose, and, passing out into the hall, closed the door after her, and stood with her back toward it.

A handsome young fellow of twenty lounged indolently there, his hands in his pockets. He bent forward without removing them, and kissed her lightly on the cheek.

"I didn't know you'd got home till a moment ago," he whispered. "Roberts just told me."

"Did you want me?—for anything in particular?" she asked, in her low, even tones.

He fidgeted a little. "Well, no—yes. The fact is, I'm so beastly bored. How long do we have to stay in, anyway, mother?"

"Until after——" She paused, confronted by an unusual word for the first time personally applied.

The boy nodded, his eyes fixed upon a distant electrolier.

There was silence between them for a moment. Then he spoke, in the tone of one anticipating opposition: "Could I have a couple of fellows in to play billiards? They needn't stay to dinner."

His mother considered a moment.

The boy whistled a few bars of a popular tune, then suddenly checked himself.

"Very well," she finally decided. "But keep as quiet as you can."

The boy took a few light steps that carried him past her; then, remembering, sobered down to a walk.

She beckoned him to her again. "Have you——" She pointed over her shoulder to the closed door.

He put up both hands in a gesture

of distaste. "Don't ask me to, mother!" he said, his uneven boy's voice soaring above the whisper. "I'm awfully sorry, but——"

He was off down the corridor before she could say another word.

Mrs. Gage turned to go into the room. At the sound of light feet descending the stairs, she waited.

"Eleanor," she called softly.

A slim young girl, of perhaps sixteen, fluttered toward the door, and threw herself, weeping, into Mrs. Gage's arms.

"Oh, mother!" she sobbed.

Mrs. Gage stroked the fair hair in silence. She had not thought the child could feel so deeply. Faintly—very faintly—she envied her her grief.

"Poor papa had to go, dear," she whispered.

"Mother," the young girl burst out, "about clothes. I haven't a thing that's mourning, and Miss Ryan says she can't possibly——"

"My dear Eleanor!" Her mother drew back, a little shocked.

The girl flushed at her mother's tone. She began to play with the slender chain that held a quaint sapphire ornament against her white throat.

"My dear——" her mother began.

The girl tossed her head, and walked away.

Left to herself, Mrs. Gage opened the door of the quiet room behind her, and went in again.

She felt annoyed and vaguely disappointed. The children were surely lacking in natural affection. Then, mother-like, she began to make excuses for them. They had been always on the wing—what with school, and dancing classes, and children's parties—even when they were little tikes. And their father had always been so tired when he came home from business that, after dinner, he had gone directly to his suite in the quiet part of the house, retiring very early. What possible chance was there for them to know him well—to love him?

How differently the former generation had been brought up! Such simple pleasures had sufficed them! In the

days, long ago, when Ansel and she had come in daily on the train—she a long-legged schoolgirl with her books slung in a strap, he an art student full of fervent visions and dreams—in those far-off days, what joyous excitement there had been in a visit to a picture gallery—a *matinée*—a trip on the river boat!

She sighed, hardly knowing why.

In a sudden restlessness, she rose and walked slowly about in the darkened room.

As she passed a closet door, she opened it, and took from a hook Ansel's bath robe. With a little shiver, she thrust her arms into the wide crimson sleeves, and wrapped it closely about her. The chill of the room had gone through her. She felt it dangerous to remain, but something held her there, aloof from the warm, bright house, alone with the dead man.

It was a long time since she had been in the room. She looked about her with a certain curiosity.

Some one had cleared the bureau of all its silver and ebony, putting them into a drawer, a silent announcement of the fact that they would no longer be needed. The chairs had been straightened against the wall. Everything had been put into a fateful order—everything but his desk. That had evidently been left for her to attend to.

She sank into the chair before it.

This silent room gave her more of a sense of nearness to her husband than his physical presence had ever given—at least, in later years. She seemed to absorb some of his personality, sitting there at his open desk—to adopt, momentarily, his viewpoint. The past filtered through her mind, and with it came a faint stirring of regret—she knew not for what.

Over the desk hung a picture. Ansel had given it to her in the early days of their engagement. He had painted it. It had a history.

Once, when Ansel was a small boy, he had run away from home, intent upon adventure, with an enticing book under one arm and a large paper bag of ginger snaps under the other.

He had curled up under a flowery hedge and slept soundly. Early next morning he had waked in time to see the sunrise, for the first time in his short life. As he had gazed, entranced, at the wonderful colors throbbing up over the rim of the world, a single desire had risen in him—to paint the scene and keep it forever!

Whereupon he had turned and trotted soberly home to ask his distracted parents to let him learn to paint.

One vacation, years later, with the half-whimsical remembrance of it strong upon him, he had gone to the identical spot and painted the picture as it hung above the desk—a flowery hedge, a stretch of meadow; beyond, a marvelous dawn that edged everything with rose color—and under the hedge, his eyes still misty with sleep, a little tousled lad gazing with all his might at the wonderful sight!

Ansel had named it "The Turning Point."

The new-made widow looked away. It gave her a vague discomfort. Mechanically, she began to straighten the loose papers on the desk—a letter, half finished, to a friend; a clipping or two; memoranda of things to be done the following day; last of all, under the pile, a photograph of Ansel at twenty-two, handsome and eager. She remembered it well. He had written his dashing, characteristic signature under it, and laughingly added, in parentheses: "The famous artist."

She glanced at it, then looked more closely. Ansel had crossed out, "The famous artist." Underneath was written, in the shaking handwriting of his later years, "The money machine."

She looked at it for a full minute before the real significance of it dawned on her.

Then it struck her like a blow in the face.

A slow flush rose to her cheeks. She felt outraged by the three words. What right had he—

Like a flash the answer came: *the right of truth!*

It was true—horribly, sadly true. They—she and the children—had made

a money machine of Ansel. And, as he had worked on the treadmill of business, grinding out a golden stream for his spendthrift family, something had mingled with the clinking coin—the *shining, irised fragments of his early dreams*. The gold they had grasped eagerly, to exchange for the trifles that made up their lives—a paragraph in the social news, informing society at large concerning Mrs. Ansel Gage's lavish social functions, her departures abroad, her magnificent furs, and gorgeous gowns.

Ah, yes! They had reached out urgent fingers for the gold, bought with Ansel's life, but they had trampled upon his dreams—unseeing—uncaring!

The widow felt dazed, as one upon whom an intolerable light has burst. Had she been dreaming all these whirling years? What had become of her own aspirations? When did it start—this feverish chase after trifles?

Her mind went back to a day when a school friend had visited her in their little home shortly after their marriage. Wealthy and materialistic, the circumscribed life of a poor man's wife had not appealed to her. "You were never meant to hide in a shabby hole like this, Flo," the friend had said. "I can get Ansel into something that will give him more money in a month than he can make in a year by dabbling in paints."

So she had trailed through their little paradise like the serpent through Eden, leaving discontent behind her.

In the end, the young wife had prevailed upon Ansel Gage to leave his beloved art for a short time.

"It will be only for a year or so, Ansel," she had urged. "Just till we have something laid by. You'll paint better if you are on your feet financially."

So had begun the slavish grind that had ended only with his life. There had been always one more thing to be gained before he went back to the work of his heart—one more social advantage to be grasped—one more stratum of luxury to be attained. In the end his dreams had been submerged beneath the muddy tide of their ambitions.

She had been blind—asleep! Now she was cruelly awake.

In uncontrollable agitation, she rose and, going to the window, flung it wide open. The chill air of the room seemed stifling.

The gray embers of the day had lit to a sudden fire with the sunset. The roofs and the spires of the city were glowing. The very air seemed aflame.

The fiery color jarred on her mood like a discordant note. She turned away to the deeper gloom of the room.

The still figure on the bed confronted her with new surprise. The living Ansel of long ago had been so vividly in her thought that she had forgotten the dead Ansel lying so quiet under the shrouding sheet.

Was this the end? The end of love—of dreams—of striving after things really worth while? Had she robbed him of his only chance?

As if she hoped to find the answer in his dead face, she bent over and drew down the sheet.

That marble mask was not Ansel, nor any one she had ever known! The white seal of finality that Death's uncompromising fingers leave behind them was stamped deep on the closed eyelids, the unsmiling lips.

It looked stern—accusing.

She sank down beside the bed, sobbing out her grief—her love—her wish to die, too!

"God! What have I done?" she cried. And still the question throbbed and beat in her heart like the refrain to an insistent tune: "Is this the end?"

Again she rose and bent over the dead man, her hands outstretched in anguished appeal.

The sunset flared into sudden flame. Its glow danced in the room like living fire.

She caught her breath.

Through the tears that blurred her vision, she saw—not the marble mask, sealed with Death's inexorable seal—but the face of a little lad, transfigured with the glory of the sunrise, glowing with dreams—hopes—aspirations—looking, not to the end, but to a still more radiant beginning!



Cupid Blows a Bubble

By Mae C. Holt



ATRICIA," I began.
"Yes, Tony," sweetly encouraged Patricia.
"I was about to ask you, Patricia, if you will marry me?"

"I will not," said Patricia.

"How times do change!" I mourned.

"I hope," began Patricia loftily, "you don't mean to insinuate that I ever

"I insinuate nothing. Insinuate, Patricia, is an ugly word. I shall not want you to use such expressions when we are married. But, as I was saying, how times do change! A generation past, if I had asked you to marry me, you would have waited only long enough to murmur, 'Ask father,' before fainting in my arms."

"You are insulting," said Patricia. "A generation ago I, at least, was in my cradle."

"Perhaps," I retorted quickly, "you mean to insinuate that I was old enough

"Insinuate is an ugly word," gloated Patricia. "But isn't the lake beautiful this morning?"

"Beautiful," I agreed. "To whom are you waving, Patricia?"

"To Jack Cummings. He is in that green canoe."

"Isn't that his sister Mary with him?" and I sat up interestedly.

"Yes," answered Patricia. "Don't you adore red hair?"

"I do," I confessed ardently.

"I meant Jack's," said Patricia scornfully.

"I meant Mary's," I confessed meekly.

"I didn't know you called her by her first name," said Patricia, in a tone of surprise.

"What?" I protested. "You leave me alone for two weeks with a glori-

ous, red-haired girl, who never finds fault with me, who even considers me witty, and——"

"She is a cat," said Patricia.

"Since you have introduced the subject, Patricia, I cannot refrain from remarking that her brother must belong to the cat family, too. But they are rowing this way!"

"Yes," said Patricia. "I am going for a row with Jack."

"How fortunate!" I murmured.

"Why?" queried Patricia suspiciously.

"It will save me a trip to the hotel," I explained. "You see, I am going for a walk with Mary."

"How thoughtful of her to come up here for you," said Patricia sweetly.

"You are spiteful, Patricia," I admonished gently. "But once more, before they reach the bank—will you marry me?"

"Yes," cried Patricia. "Give me the ring. Quickly!"

"It is most disconcerting to be snapped up like this, Patricia. It's hardly modest. Besides, how do you know I have a ring?"

"Silly! Don't you suppose I can see it bulging out of your pocket? Please, dear, dear Tony! I want Mary to see me wearing it." Then, wiggling it back and forth on her finger, she cried gaily: "Oh, good morning, Jack! Mary, don't you want to take me back to the hotel with you? Tony says he wants Jack to play golf with him. Oh, Tony, wait just one second!"

Was she going to kiss me before them both? I was torn between pride and embarrassment. But I needn't have been, for Patricia, putting her lips very close to my ear, only whispered:

"I'll give you back your ring this evening, Tony!"



XVI.—GRAY CATS

No mere mortal has the right
 To carry that exalted air;
 Best people are not angels quite;
 While—not the worst of people's doings scare
 The devil. . . .
—Pippa Passes.

JACK RIVERS nearly dropped his cocktail glass. And then he betrayed—not to say outraged—his excellent antecedents and upbringing by staring with all his eyes across the crowded hotel dining room.

"My dear Jack!" said his wife, in that mild tone with which a certain type of woman can flick the nerves as with a whip.

"I—I beg your pardon, Clarisse!" he exclaimed, hastily gulping down the Martini, olive and all. His comely, uncomplex face was deeply flushed, and he rattled his spoon in his soup plate.

"Awfully hot in here, isn't it?" he remarked, in a hopeful tone.

But Mrs. Rivers was regarding him with a perplexed and speculative frown. She was a cool, gentle, well-dressed woman, with possibilities that she did not take the trouble to advertise. She looked casually around and saw a peculiarly lovely woman, in a misty-gray dress, sweeping down the room between the little tables. As soon as she had inventoried the woman, she turned swiftly back to her husband. He was looking at the beautiful woman in gray, and the woman was looking at him.

Only for a moment, however. She sailed calmly on, and Rivers choked into his tumbler. Neither had bowed; it was, however, obvious that they had known each other. One might even go a step farther, and surmise that they had known each other rather well.

The wonderful gray gown swept slowly to a table not far distant. Against an accidentally effective background of potted palm trees, the woman's clear, pearl-white profile was traced as if in chalk.

"What an unusual-looking woman!" said Mrs. Rivers gently. She was now gazing steadily at her husband.

He gave up his futile efforts at dissembling. "Yes," he said. "She's supposed to be a bit of a beauty."

"Curious coloring—that deep red hair," remarked Clarisse. "When did you know her, Jack?"

"Oh, years and years ago—before I met you. She hasn't changed much, though—"

Clarisse Rivers smiled at the singularly male naiveté of that "before I met you." It admitted so many things!

"An early affair?" she commented sweetly. "I quite understand."

He flushed even more darkly. "Hang

it—you don't!" he blurted. "She's not a bit what you think she is. She's a charming woman, and she's done more good in her life than—than——"

"Than I, for instance!" suggested Clarisse, with no touch of malice. "Very likely! I never did care for philanthropy. It's nearly always the last resort for—women with pasts—— Oh, here is Mr. Morrill!"

Rivers scowled and frowned.

"Confounded young brute!" he grumbled. "Oh—er—how are you, Morrill? Have a drink?"

"Thanks; just had one with that cracked globe-trotter over there. Forget his name, but he seems to have known some of my people in the Dark Ages. Don't mind if I smoke, Mrs. Rivers?"

She shook her head, looking at him through lazy, half-shut eyes. Her brown hair was satin smooth and exquisitely dressed. Her gray gown fitted perfectly; her lips, a trifle thinly cut, but warmly red, were smiling very slightly. She was a perfect specimen of her type—the sort of woman who takes for amusement the chances that a richer nature takes for great emotions.

It is a curious, though veritable, fact—De Kock made it immortal in a paragraph—that the more profoundly a woman feels, the less effective she is, emotionally. It is your experimentalist who scores. If a woman's ardor be thoroughly awakened, she may well be sapped of outward demonstration; but if she remain calm herself, there are almost no lengths to which her exploratory instinct may not lead her.

Rivers, though he trusted his wife, had a queer qualm of discomfort as he saw the look on her face as she glanced at Ralph Morrill between her half-closed lids. The qualm was so acute that he rose abruptly, and, acting on some wild impulse, said:

"I'm going over to speak to Mrs. Carpenter. See you later."

Clarisse permitted her brown eyes to open a little wider; then, with her characteristically inscrutable little smile, she looked back to Morrill.

"A pretty woman, isn't she?" she remarked softly.

"Is she?" he said. He could not take his eyes from her face.

Meanwhile, Rivers, with a deference that was close to being exaggerated, was bowing over Pippa Carpenter's slim hand.

"It's been a long time."

She spoke first. Her purple-blue eyes were a little wistful. Pippa had never been able to dismiss an old love affair as she threw away old clothes. Some glamour, some essence of romance, seemed forever to cling to her memories of it. Jack Rivers had once held a place in her life; it was from that remote corner of things that he seemed to speak to her now, clothed in an ancient robe of sentiment.

"Pippa——" he said. "Oh, I dare say I sound like an awful rotter when I dare to call you that—now! But—do you know what I mean?—I always believed in you, somehow."

"Thank you," said Mrs. Carpenter simply, meeting his eyes without embarrassment.

In an odd way, her very simplicity seemed to put Rivers less at his ease. He was not a clever man, or a particularly good one, but he was honest, in his way. His thick mouth tightened to a hard line, even as his eyes paid Pippa his tribute in gentle homage.

"Please don't take it nastily," he pleaded. "It—it means an awful lot to me—the way I mean it—only—I haven't the hang of saying it right! Look here!" He paused, while he seemed to be gathering courage. "My—my wife's a no-end good sport—for a woman. I—want you to meet her."

"Thank you," Philippa said again. "Do you mind telling me why you are doing this?"

"I—don't know," said Rivers, rather blankly. "I—don't know. But—— Oh, darn it all! A woman ought to be judged by what she is! And I guess you'll stack up to anybody's class—I— I mean about meeting my wife——"

"Thank you—for the third time," said Pippa. Suddenly she straightened up, with her odd little quick breath;

every one knew that half gasp of Pippa's—it came only when she was excited and deeply moved. "I should like to meet your wife—now!" she said.

Rivers paused just a moment; he knew that he must make good, and he was not sure that he would be able to. With a boy's awkwardness, he nodded, without looking at her.

"Sure!" he said, and turned away.

"Wait!" said Mrs. Carpenter. She was determined to give him time. "After dinner I shall be in the music room just off the conservatory. If your—wife—cares to meet me, she will find me there."

Half an hour later, Pippa, sitting in the music room, and listening to the Viennese waltzes from the stringed band at the farther end, saw a curious and significant little comedy. It took place in the corner of the room that was devoted to small tables, laden with coffee and liqueurs. She could almost have transcribed what Mrs. Rivers was saying: "Why should I care to meet one of your old—friends?"

Rather than meet Rivers on so ignominious a return, Philippa rose hastily, and moved to an obscure alcove near a window, where he would not be likely to find her soon.

She sat quite motionless, with all sensation, all thought blotted out except a vague gratitude for the fresh night air that came so softly in through the open window. A woman who had outlived a thousand emotions, she was yet a prey to them; living as intensely as ever, suffering perhaps a trifle more because of her augmented capacity for pain. It seemed to her that in Clarisse Rivers' slight she had died a dozen deaths. Not that she valued the social recognition of Jack Rivers' wife—but as woman to woman! Ah, there was where it hurt! Mrs. Rivers was in a position to draw her skirts aside; and Mrs. Carpenter was not in a position to resent it, except in her own sore heart.

She started suddenly, as if she had been called, though no one near her had spoken.

A tall man was standing beside her,

with a small cup of black coffee in one hand, and a liqueur glass of cognac in the other. He was smiling down at her in a kindly, humorous way.

"Take the demi-tasse first," he said conversationally. "And the brandy is really worth while. I couldn't get the proper sort of punch cup to serve it in, but I went to the bar and picked out the brand myself."

Philippa stared at him. He was broad-shouldered and sparely built, with a strong, deeply lined face, and wonderfully clear, gray eyes.

His simple and entirely courteous informality disarmed her. With a directness that matched his own, she said, as she took the cup: "Thanks. Who are you?"

"A world wanderer," he returned; "interested in the game of life, as lived both by myself and others. Ready for the cognac?"

Pippa emptied the tiny glass and handed both that and the cup back to him. He stood looking down at them.

"Why?" she asked.

He shrugged his big shoulders. "I was interested," he said.

For an instant some keener feeling flashed into his eyes; then he looked away quickly, as if afraid she would notice it.

On the other side of the room, Mrs. Rivers was leaning languidly back in an armchair. At her side sat a clean-shaven, good-looking, young fellow with close-cropped yellow hair. He was fanning her, as he gazed at her intently. Clarisse was looking her best.

"A subtle woman!" commented the world wanderer, following Philippa's eyes. "More dangerous than if she were what the world calls bad. She has poor Morrill hard and fast!"

"The boy with her now?"

"Yes. Don't you know him?"

She shook her head.

"Want to?"

"Not particularly." She turned wearily to the window, and the soft night outside. "I am tired of men!"

He laughed very gently. "Am I dismissed?"

"Why—no!" rejoined Mrs. Carpen-

ter, with a start. "I hadn't thought of you in that way!"

The world wanderer raised his thick, black eyebrows. The echo of his laughter was still in his voice as he said: "So you don't think of me as a man! Then I *am* dismissed!" All at once a curiously grave, intimate look came into his eyes. "Life is a battle," he said. "But the battle is to the strong. Good night. You are not angry with me for speaking to you?"

"No."

He hesitated a moment, then said: "I wish you would save Morrill. I think he's worth it. His people are the right sort."

"Save him! From what?"

He glanced across the room.

"Oh, is she *that* sort of woman!" exclaimed Philippa, enlightened. "No—wanderer—I don't think it is my particular obligation to save Mr.—Morrill, isn't it?"

"Good night again," said the world wanderer.

"You're going? Good-by!"

"Not good-by. We are going to meet again."

"Who knows?" she said, smiling faintly.

"I do!" And with the briefest of bows, he turned and left her.

At one end of the long music room was a conservatory, stocked with exotic plants. More than once Pippa had taken refuge there from garrulous old ladies and the eternal stringed band. Now, with an odd and inexplicable sense of loss and desolation in her heart, she rose and made her way to the green, and quiet, and fragrance of the retreat. She noticed, idly enough, as she crossed the ten feet between her chair and the conservatory door, that Mrs. Rivers and Morrill had disappeared. Rivers she had not seen for twenty minutes.

Inside the hothouse the air was faint and sickly sweet. The dampness was the dampness of the mist that rises from marshes. In that warm, moist dimness, lighted only by a low-burning Chinese lantern, it was difficult to see at first. Then—she saw!

And, seeing, she retreated with soft

steps. For a man and a woman were sitting on the rustic bench that an æsthetic proprietor had placed there. All about were palms, and roses, and lilies. Wrapped in perfume and dusk, the two were clasped close in an embrace that evidently had deafened them to the opening door.

Pippa Carpenter, with her instant instinct to shield love and lovers, shrank toward the wall and averted her eyes. But even in that moment, the door from the music room opened once more, less gently, and the big frame of Jack Rivers loomed there.

The broad bar of light streamed sharply on to the two figures on the bench. The clean-cut features of young Ralph Morrill flashed into view; the woman, with a smothered cry, hid her face against his shoulder. There was nothing to be seen of her but a wave of silver-gray chiffon.

"I'll talk to you in five minutes, Morrill," Rivers said harshly, and left the conservatory. He had not seen Philippa.

When the door had closed again, she walked quietly toward the two, who sat trembling before the alternatives that confronted them. Clarisse Rivers raised her white face, and Pippa's very soul shook before the revelation there. Morrill got up from the bench, and, with his hands in his pockets, turned his back. For a full moment no one spoke or moved.

The two women looked at each other—one of those deep and candid looks that are unusual between women except in moments when unexpected crises tear away their masks. In that moment the reputable and respected wife knew Mrs. Carpenter to be a better woman than herself. And Pippa, seeing the weakness that lay beneath that cool and self-contained exterior, felt a rush of pity that carried away upon its generous flood all thought either of resentment or of blame.

"What—what are you going to do?" asked Mrs. Rivers, with the piteous simplicity of a child. Her hands were hanging limply at her sides. She seemed too broken even for the tenseness of a

great emotion. Violent desperation had gone out of her, with dignity. She looked, as she felt, as if she were past caring; as if her ignominy were too complete to admit of the torment of effort or appeal.

Gently Philippa lifted her hands and held them in her own.

"Sit down," she said, drawing the drooping figure quietly to the rustic bench from which the woman had risen. Mrs. Rivers shuddered once, and then sat still. Her eyes, wide and hopeless, never left Pippa's. The scent of the flowers was almost overpowering; the air, heavy and damp, pressed upon the senses. In the rosy, artificial twilight of the conservatory, Pippa could just see the other woman's white face and those waiting eyes.

She herself did not sit down, but stood between Clarisse and the door into the music room.

Morrill took a step nearer the two women. He was looking almost as uncomfortable as he felt.

"I say, you know—" he began heavily.

Mrs. Carpenter cut him short. "Don't talk," she said. "You may be heard by—some one." Then she bent over Mrs. Rivers, and said, gently and steadily: "If I save you, will you—give it up?"

She heard the faintest, gasping sob.

"Oh, God, yes!" whispered Clarisse. "But you can't—you can't! He—saw!"

Philippa drew a long breath. "He saw," she repeated. "But it is quite dark in here. And—we are both wearing gray gowns."

Mrs. Rivers clutched violently at her hands. "Wh—what do you mean?" she breathed.

"In the dusk all cats are gray," quoted Philippa, smiling gently, if a trifle bitterly; neither man nor woman saw the smile, for her back was toward the Chinese lantern. "Mrs. Rivers, you have everything to lose—your husband's love, your friends' respect, your own future. I, on the contrary, have—nothing. Your husband is in that room waiting for you to come out. You must not come out—not for a long time. The

woman who comes out must come out with Mr. Morrill. And—never forget this—it is that woman whom Mr. Rivers—saw!"

Clarisse was crying quietly.

"Don't!" said Pippa, and stooped to kiss her. "Don't, my dear! You've got what so very, very few women get—another chance. Most of us, if we make mistakes, must live and die with them, or go on struggling, and drifting, and choking, in the whirlpools, and the tidal waves, finding no islands, no shoal places—nothing except fresh mistakes! But you've the one big chance that can be given to any one—a new beginning. By and by, when you walk out of here, walk out a free woman, with the past blotted out. *And don't repent!* That way madness lies—not the madness of the brain, but the madness of the heart, the madness of the soul—" She checked herself, and laughed a little, very softly, and very sadly. "Good-by," she said. "I'll be leaving here by the late train. Mr. Morrill?"

The man moved forward with lowered head.

"Look here," he muttered. "I'm game to take my share of this—"

"Speak lower!" said Mrs. Carpenter sharply.

"I mean," he bungled on, "it isn't fair to let—"

Without further words, she flung open the door.

After the quiet and half light of the hothouse, the music room looked exaggeratedly brilliant.

Directly in front of them stood Jack Rivers. He was dead white, but a light leaped into his eyes when he saw the woman who was with Morrill.

Mrs. Carpenter turned to her escort. "Good night," she said simply; and, flushing darkly, he walked away.

With an indefinable sense of defiance, she met the eyes of Jack Rivers.

"Well?" she said.

He looked at her. "I was sorry that my wife didn't care to meet you," he said. "But now I am—glad."

Holding her head high, and walking with a firm step, Pippa crossed the bright and crowded room. Just as she

was leaving it, on her way to the stairway leading to her own quarters, she encountered the world wanderer. As if he could speak with her soul in a language that did not need to be transmuted into words, he said at once:

"You are going away?"

She lifted her eyes to meet his. Something of her disconsolate mood must have showed there, for his look was almost tender.

"Do you remember Kipling's Gray Wolf?" she asked, and quoted:

"Where shall we lair to-day——"

He caught her up:

"For to-morrow we follow new trails!

"We shall meet again soon; I am not afraid of that. I only ask: Do you go west or east?"

"West!" she said. "West—west—to new worlds! So far west that——"

"That you reach the East!" he supplemented. "That's enough. I shall follow you, and I'll find you. And

never forget, meanwhile, that the battle is to the strong!"

They faced each other in the ornate commonplace hotel corridor.

"I don't feel—strong!" she murmured.

"Dear lady, you are!" he said.

It seemed to her that his gray eyes blazed with a fire more fervent and more clear than that of the stars themselves.

"What does it all mean?" she whispered.

He smiled down at her. It was as if he were caressing her with his heart and spirit. She seemed to feel his hand upon her, lightly, lovingly—though he had never touched her.

"What does it mean?" she asked again, beneath her breath.

He caught her between his hands, but held her three inches away from him.

"I'll let you—guess!" he said.

She went upstairs in a mist of moonbeams.



EBB TIDE

O TO go back to the desolate spaces—
 Sea-blown mist over long low sand—
 A lapping tide, and a wind in our faces—
 And, dusk behind us, the blowthy land,
 Sultry stars, and a beacon flaring,
 Shearing the dusk with a blade of light,
 Paving a way for my true love's faring—
 A golden way, through a silver night.

You came from the west with a star above you,
 Came, straight as the light where it clove the mist,
 To swear in the dew and the dusk: "I love you!"
 The tide ran full, as we kept our tryst.

* * * * *

Ebb tide waits on the full of the flowing—
 Death waits on the wind, if it veer not and turn—
 In the daylight stark, we must reap our sowing,
 Nor reck of the mists, where the soft stars burn.

MARTHA McCULLOCH-WILLIAMS.



IT seems to be the custom now in New York to leave most of the important productions until after the holidays; then they come on with a rush. Not that all the important ones turn out as deserving of the adjective; by no means. However, this season shows a few hopeful signs in a smattering of romanticism and one or two sincere dramas dealing with unfurbelowed, primitive emotions and scenes befitting them. These signs give us hope that our stage may be on the upward trend toward nature again, about to cease from lurid sensationalism, and the bold and boring pseudo-drama in which "virtue" is preached through the mouth of vice.

Because Barrie is not only knighted, but also titled among the heart's immortals, we should perhaps deal with his offering first; though it be to lament that the beloved author has given us so disappointing a thing as "The Legend of Leonora." If we had known that he was to dabble in farce and burlesque, to treat ostensibly real and modern characters in the spirit of that sublime bard who wrote "Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle," we could have adapted ourselves perhaps. As it is, we only feel that the play is a long way from being Bernard Shaw; and only Shaw is satisfactory in the type of entertainment that requires really more impudence than anything else. We can-

not altogether love our Barrie in the rôle of a gentle buffoon.

Miss Maude Adams draws her usual following, of course; but there are those who say: "Ah, but! You should have seen Mrs. Patrick Campbell as *Leonora*." And that we can believe; for the rôle makes a positive demand for beauty, for fascination, and for the dulcet voice.

"Sari" is one of those musical comedies that sometimes happen; all too rarely. It is not a bit like "The Chocolate Soldier," except that it is as good, as clever, as tuneful, and as generally bewitching.

Little Mizzi Hajos has made an immense hit in the leading rôle. She appears as a gypsy-blooded peasant maid in just the dress you have seen on little Hun and Polish children in the foreign districts of your own State or city—the plain little frock and the big ging-ham pinafore covering it; the hair sleeked back, without the tiniest strand escaping to curl, and divided into little plaits so tightly woven that they stick out with their own tension; and peasant shoes and stockings. In this garb she has made a success that is too big for even the electric signs to record justly. It is natural; and nature is such a novelty on Broadway.

Billie Burke is appearing successfully in an irritating play, by Somerset Maugham, called "The Land of Promise." Mr. Maugham came over from

London and spent three months in the Canadian Northwest collecting data and atmosphere. It all goes well enough with you if you don't care about either correct atmosphere of place, or the human verities. It is such nonsense—this notion of Eastern and London playwrights that they can make a Westerner with a pair of overalls, a coat of tan, and a wrist-slung leather whip. This writer remembers mirthfully some of the notices of "The Virginian," and "The Great Divide," in Western cities—how the San Francisco press, in particular, foamed at the mouth. "The Land of Promise" is calculated to arouse the same feelings in a Western Canadian. And Miss Burke does nothing to quiet them.

It is dangerous to have enthusiasms; they lead to exaggerated statements. Yet, realizing this, I feel I must say that "Change" appeals to me as the best play written in English, and produced, in many seasons. This play, by J. O. Francis, won the prize offered by Lord Howard de Walden, for the best Welsh play by a Welsh author. Evidently the judges were men of critical fitness.

The play has literary distinction, technical excellence, genuine and thorough character drawing, and it shows a deeply poetic understanding of emotional conflict. If it were worthily acted throughout, its power over the feelings of an audience would be little short of terrific. As presented by the Welsh company, it is very nicely done in a very well-trained amateur style, which never reaches the heights or sounds the depths that the author has signified in his drama, and left there to be unveiled by the revelational art of acting.

The scene is the valley of Aberpandy, a coal section of Glamorgan, Wales. There is a strike among the miners; evidently it is the first great clash between capital and labor in that district. But the spectator is not besieged with pro or con socialistic arguments. The author proves that he is an artist and not a propagandist by showing that the heart of humanity is a universal thing and bigger than class or class struggle, big-

ger than family and family strife, bigger than the whole conflict of past ideals with the onrushing future.

He puts the actualities, the concrete facts, of life in their proper place, as secondary; and sets above them nature, the common feelings of men, their dumb aspirations, their groping desires. In this point, even Galsworthy falls below him.

We saw Galsworthy's "The Pigeon" really wonderfully acted; if the play had been a corpse, Mr. Ames' cast would have infused life into it. The Welsh company does little more than elocute the lines of "Change." It is the play, alone, unaided, that grips. It sends you away feeling, thinking, for days, and forever after studying life and mankind with new sight. Even if it does not live on the boards to reach your town, get a printed copy and enjoy it.

We are shown the world-wide conflict through the focus of one family in one little cottage room. John Price is a collier; he is an old-fashioned Welshman, a bit fanatical in his theology, and marked deep with the Welsh characteristics of pride, obstinacy, and the passions that burn on relentlessly, inextinguishably, and are never tempered by time.

His wife, Gwen, is of the same sort, except for the mellowing influence of maternity. She is unlettered, and her whole life is bound up in her three sons—John Henry, Lewis, and Gwilym.

The old parents have worked, and scrimped, and sacrificed, from the time the boys were born, to be able to give them education. It rings in your ears poignantly, that Welsh cry: "Oh, if I'd only 'ad a bit o' schoolin'!" This gift of gifts the Prices have given to their children.

When the play begins, they are waiting the return of John Henry, who has been studying for the ministry. His father's lifelong ambition—to hear a son of his preaching in Horeb Chapel—is about to be realized.

This modifies somewhat the two griefs they have experienced in their other children. Gwilym is frail, and, to prolong his life, they must send him

to Australia. Lewis has turned socialist and labor orator and agnostic, and the fanatical father has all but turned him out of the house.

It is Gwilym who smoothes the way for domestic harmony, and always interposes his own gentleness and tender understanding of both viewpoints, and saves the family unity. Gwilym has never been strong enough to work. He has been his mother's constant companion, "always about the house," as she says pitifully, thinking what her lonely days will be without him. He is "a bit of a poet," as he expresses it, when seeking for the reason why he can understand the old folks in their dogged narrowness, while his brothers cannot.

At the close of the first act, word comes that John Henry has forsaken the ministry. It is a crushing blow to old John Price. The mother's worst heartache, in this instance, is for the father's disappointment. Whatever John Henry has done, he is her boy, and he is coming home to her.

To put the incidents briefly in their order, the father is unable to recognize ideals of conduct that differ from his own. So he turns John Henry out of the house and blinks in amazement, as if he had received a sudden blow, when his wife cries at him: "I hate you." It is the first time it has even faintly dawned upon him that Gwen regards the children as hers individually, not only as his.

Then the strike comes to a climax. The masters try to bring in nonunion men, and the soldiers come to protect them. The strikers resist, and Lewis is sent for to come down and talk to the men, because he is the only one who has a great power over them. He climbs on a wall to talk to them, to control them from violence. Gwilym, seeing him in danger, springs up to pull him back. The soldiers fire, and Gwilym is killed.

We are told all this by the women—the mother and Cousin Lizzie Ann—who see it from the window. This scene is a superb bit of writing; for, though it is most inadequately acted, the impression of what has just happened

down the hill is so vivid that one seems to have seen every terrible detail of it. The mother gives vent to the Celtic death wail, and falls to the ground.

The last act shows us the home five weeks later, on the day Gwilym was to have sailed for Australia. Lewis has not gone back to work, though the strike is ended. The agony of his brother's death is upon him. He feels that the very hills voicelessly cry "murderer" as he passes. He is all Celt in his way of taking the tragedy. Justly or unjustly, it has seared his heart with the brand of Cain. And at last his father speaks it aloud: "The brand of Cain."

The mother's feeble hands cannot hold him. He tells her he cannot, dare not, stay. He sets sail for Australia.

"It's no use, mother. I'm a haunted man. Always I can see it—the crowd, the soldiers, the stones flyin' through the air, blood on a soldier's face. Then the shot—and Gwilym's lyin' there at my feet, dead. It wasn't my fault. But I can hear them all sayin' it silently, as I'm walkin' the streets: 'There goes the man who killed his brother,' and I wonder why they don't speak it."

"Now, at last he's said it. And it seems easier now it's said. But I can't go on here. He'd be sayin' it to me again, and always his face would be sayin' it. Till I'd go mad with it at last, and kill him. I'm goin'—out there where there's no hills to keep a man rememberin'."

The mother is left alone moaning: "Not one left—not one!"

Interwoven with this relentlessly true tragedy is comedy as genuine and veracious. We have Lizzie Ann, and Isaac Pugh, the village gossip; and the unctuous character of Cockney Sam, the railway guard, whose speeches are a rich joy. It is not humor intruded merely for comic relief, this humorous Sam. It is character uttering its philosophy after its own method; and what he has to say contributes vitally to the meaning of the drama as a whole.

To my mind the play is superior to the Hauptmann village plays and Strindberg's "Miss Julia" to which it has been compared, because, though

tragic, it is not sordid. In short, it is not the tragedy of degeneration, but of struggling aspiration. The tide of feeling runs so strongly out that at last it encounters a stray wind of hope and mounts; the last effect on you is of something inspiring, even optimistic.

Every speech of the clean-cut dialogue is pointed straight and swift to its purpose; there is that economy of utterance which only an artist knows how to employ. Whether we take it only literally, or also as symbolical of art's benignancy, it is very beautiful, this idea of Gwilym—the young man who is too frail of body for the actualities of labor and strife, but who understands both sides, and smoothes the way for his father and brothers to meet; and at last in the crisis, which he cannot avert, gives his life for his brother.

This Welsh author has achieved what no one else has done; he has given us a play dealing with the class struggle and with the conflict between old and new that is upheaving the social world now—a play dealing with present-day ferment—that is at the same time a genuine work of art. If it wrings your heart with its tragedy, yet it gives you something bigger than the tragedy—"Standeth God within the Shadow." That realization stays with you.

The four scenes are set in the living room of the cottage purposely—to present the tragedies attendant on change within the room of dear intimacy that most means "home," that you may recognize more poignantly how that home is being destroyed by the sons' blind impulse toward progress and the father's equally blind opposition to it. Following this same subtle, but intensely potent method, the culminating tragedy of the strike, the murder of Gwilym, is not staged before your eyes as a theatrical actuality, but is visualized for you through the agony of the mother.

Not the least wonderful thing in this

play is the way it presents motherhood. We see Gwen bereft of her sons, not only by change, but by the command of her husband, who is master of his house, and master of her who bore sons to belong to him, to the man who cannot know one tithe of her love, her sacrifice, or the agony of her loss. Neither sons nor husband take her into account. She is only Maternity—bearing children in obedience to earth impulses she does not understand, only to see those earth impulses devour them out of her arms.

A new Scotch comedy, "Kitty MacKay" has caught on after a struggle. It is a prettily costumed affair, with just enough story to enable *Kitty* to be winsome and cannie, and to give some delightful kirk elders and deacons full opportunity to invoke our mirth with their religious discussions.

Another play of charm and mirth is "Young Wisdom" in which the Taliaferro sisters jointly star. It is a slim affair, in which a young girl of ultra-modern and rather alarming ideas is frightened out of them by being forced to live up to them. There are amusing complications thrown in; and, wisely, no severe histrionic demands are made upon the Taliaferros.

"Omar, the Tentmaker," is an attempt to make a drama of the Rubaiyat by the introduction of "Thou" from the perpetually quoted quatrain; also the "jug of wine." It is very beautifully staged, and the title rôle is consistently acted by Guy Bates Post. The chief difficulty is that the author has tried to put Omar's whole life—as conceived by him—into one play. In spite of ourselves, we became confused. Really it is not fair to review "Omar" without seeing it a second time.

If only a few of these things had been presented in the three months before the holidays, instead of being launched, four or five per night, after New Year's!





FOR BOOK LOVERS

MR. H. G. WELLS' most recent novel is not, in our opinion, one that is likely to develop into a "best seller." And this is because it is a study of a rather unique human relationship.

As a study, it is intensely interesting, but probably only to the comparatively limited class of people who prefer a problem to a story.

Most readers are likely to feel that their credulity is overtaxed by the suggestion that a father would take his son into his confidence respecting his love affairs. This, however, is the task that Mr. Wells has imposed on Stephen Stratton, in "The Passionate Friends," published by Harper & Bros.

All the complications grew out of the fact that Lady Mary craved the position that her lover was unable to give her, and so, when they might have married and been happy, she refused.

Stephen says: "I wanted to be public about our love, I wanted to be open and defiant, and she—hesitated. She wanted to be secret. She wanted to keep me. But she also wanted to keep everything else in her life."

So she married Justin, whose wealth was sufficient for her needs, and Stephen married Rachel More. Mr. Wells has apparently sought to convey the idea that Stephen loved both women, but we must confess that this part of Stephen's narrative is rather vague. We are unable to come to a clear understanding as to what he wants his son to conclude as to his sentiment toward the boy's mother.

Aside from this single point, there is no flaw in the book. It is up to Mr. Wells' own high standard.

Mrs. Harriet T. Comstock has written another very human and dramatic story in "A Son of the Hills," published by Doubleday, Page & Co.

Mrs. Comstock's last book, it will be remembered, "Joyce of the North Woods," told a story of certain phrases of life in the lumber regions of the Adirondacks. In this new book, she has taken for her theme the life of the poor whites in the Virginia mountains.

In this last, as in the first, she has shown her unusual gift of transferring to the printed page a vivid and vital picture of the realities of the life she describes. Not only that, but, what is even more essential to a good story, she has selected a plot that is full of complications, and has handled it with a keen sense of its dramatic possibilities.

Evidently she sympathizes deeply with her hero, Sandy Morley, and fully understands his longing to realize the standards and aspirations of his ancestors.

The pathos of his position, his craving for education, the sufferings and difficulties encountered and overcome in his pursuit of it, constituting the thread of the story, all combine to make it one of very real human interest.

He is urged on and encouraged by Cynthia Walden, who is the girl of the story.

A touch of modernity is given to the book in the character of Marcia Lowe, a Northern woman and a physician, who has come to Lost Hollow to unravel a mystery, and occupies much of her time in relieving distress, and introducing the latest ideas in hygiene.

Harold MacGrath's new story, "Pidgin Island," published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company, does not show the fertility in invention, and the variety of action and situation, that he has taught us to look for in his yarns.

He has taken a much longer time than is customary for him to get to his story, so that when he finally reaches it, he is obliged to hurry through it in order to keep it within the conventional limit of three hundred and odd pages.

Altogether too much space is wasted on the preliminaries of bringing the hero and heroine together and in developing their love affair, and too little is devoted to the details of the smuggling at Pidgin Island; so that the real plot of the story is a mere outline in which character and events are more or less indistinct.

A chapter or two would have sufficed to let the reader know that Jack Cranford was a member of the secret service, and that Diana Wynne's presence at Pidgin Island was shrouded in mystery. The descriptions of their pursuit of the black bass could have been dispensed with, and more told about Michael and Donald Smead, and Fagin and Dennison.

The scene of the story, at the eastern end of Lake Ontario, and the plottings of the little band of smugglers, offer ample opportunity for plenty of exciting adventure, but the attempt of Mr. MacGrath to turn the materials of an adventure story into a romantic love story has not been attended with happy results.



"The Escape of Mr. Trimm" is the title of a volume of nine stories, by Irvin S. Cobb, published by the George H. Doran Company.

It seems to us that neither the author nor the publishers were well advised in putting this book on the market. It is a generally accepted fact that, with a few notable exceptions, a book of short stories, is, as a commercial venture at least, a more than questionable undertaking. To justify it at all, the

collection so offered ought to be considerably above the average in quality.

In the case of those contained in the present book, this justification is wholly lacking. We are given quantity at the expense of quality, for the stories are wordy and long drawn out. There are pages of description and paragraphs of action.

Besides this, the subject matter of the tales is so unpleasant that, if one has the patience and perseverance to finish them, he lays the book aside either with a feeling of relief, or of acute mental distress, according to his temperament.

There is little to choose between these stories, but if the choice were forced upon one, those that would probably be selected are "The Escape of Mr. Trimm," "An Occurrence Up a Side Street," and "Fishhead."



It almost seems, sometimes, as if "Big Business," under the various guises of "the System," "Predatory Wealth," and "the Money Trust," had come to be one of the necessities of life for the American public. It certainly has for a certain class of politicians, "publicists," and novelists.

One of its most recent appearances is in Samuel G. Blythe's story, "The Price of Place," published by George H. Doran.

The only logical inference to be drawn from this story, and its title, is that every man who successfully holds a political position must pay tribute, in one form or another, to the money power of the country.

We are given to understand quite clearly that James Marsh, who aspired to congressional honors, was obliged to make his choice between oblivion and political achievement, and that every other man who goes to Congress has to face the same alternative.

It may be true that every man seeking or holding political office has to deal with a McManus or a Senator Paxton, but so far the only evidence that this

state of things is universal is to be found in works of fiction.

As a matter of fact, there are signs that adherence to such a belief is symptomatic of—well, of credulity.

We think the theme of Mr. Blythe's story lacks plausibility in these twentieth-century days, and his handling of it is not sufficiently skillful to "put it over" as our theatrical friends would say.



The latest of George Randolph Chester's Wallingford books is "Wallingford and Blackie Daw," published, as its predecessors were, by the Bobbs-Merrill Co.

In form, this volume is a novel divided into twenty-four chapters; in substance it is a collection of short stories, some of which, however, run into several chapters.

The first one, for instance, covers the first two chapters of the book. It is concerned with a real-estate transaction in the town of Tarryville. The deal that puts Wallingford in possession of a fine residence is complicated by his discovery that the seller, one of the town's magnates, has taken unfair advantage of Wallingford by a faulty description of the property. But, with the aid of his friends in the local political ring, he manipulates matters in such a way that it costs the shrewd business man one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars.

The second is also a transaction in real estate, and this time a couple of

elderly maiden ladies share the profits with Wallingford and his friend.

On the whole, these adventures seem to be confined to operations in which the two highwaymen keep well within the law and succeed, by their superior wit, in turning the tables upon highly respectable gentlemen who have planned to fleece them. Thus the morals of the book, such as they are, are comparatively harmless.

Blackie Daw has begun to assert himself rather more emphatically, and so plays a more important part than heretofore.

Important New Books.

- "Home," Anonymous; Century Co.
- "The Witness for the Defense," A. E. W. Mason; Charles Scribner's Sons.
- "A People's Man," E. Phillips Oppenheim; Little, Brown & Co.
- "The Butterfly," Henry K. Webster; D. Appleton & Co.
- "From the Angle of Seventeen," Eden Phillpotts; Little, Brown & Co.
- "Mascarose," Gordon Arthur Smith; Charles Scribner's Sons.
- "All Men are Ghosts," L. P. Jacks; Henry Holt & Co.
- "The Soul of Life," David Lisle; F. A. Stokes Co.
- "The Island of the Stairs," Cyrus Townsend Brady; A. C. McClurg & Co.
- "Anne, Actress," Juliet G. Sager; F. A. Stokes Co.
- "The Friendly Road," David Grayson; Doubleday, Page & Co.
- "A Mésalliance," Katharine Tynan; Duffield & Co.
- "The Lovely Lady," Mary Austin; Doubleday, Page & Co.
- "The Unafraid," Eleanor M. Ingram; J. B. Lippincott Co.
- "The Gay Adventure," Richard Bird; Bobbs-Merrill Co.



Talks With Ainslee's Readers

TO most people the breaking of a resolution is a matter for deep remorse. We have just broken a resolution—we simply had to break it—and in consequence are highly pleased with ourselves.

Three years ago this magazine adopted the policy of "everything complete in each number." We felt that any story worth waiting for from month to month was too good to have to wait for from month to month. We believed that by printing, complete, novels of ordinary book length, such as "Ann" in this present number, we could include everything essential to our readers' enjoyment. As time went on, and we compared our complete novels with the serials running in the most entertaining of our contemporaries, we became more and more assured of the correctness of our judgment.

And then, just as we were beginning to sit back and think no more about the matter, there came to us the manuscript of an American novel, so absorbing, so compelling, that, policy or no policy, we could not afford to let it go, even if it took two numbers, or three or four numbers of AINSLEE'S for its publication. The name of it is "John Tremaine, Thief," and the author is Marie Van Vorst. It will come very close to giving a real meaning to that poor, old, much-abused phrase, "the great American novel." To find a story worthy of comparison with it, we have to go back to Paul Leicester Ford's "The Honorable Peter Sterling," published twenty years ago.

One reading of "John Tremaine, Thief" and there was no question as to whether or not we should print it. The problem immediately became *how* to print it. Publishing it in one number would take up almost two-thirds of the entire magazine; stringing it out through the best part of a year in installments of the usual length would lay it open to all the objections that we find in the ordinary serial. On the other hand, we did not wish to eliminate, even temporarily, the complete novel, which is such an important

feature of AINSLEE'S, or to cut down the number of short stories. We have finally worked it out so that by combining the shorter of our novelettes and short stories in the next two or three numbers, we will be able to give you "John Tremaine" in big sections of twenty-five thousand words each without sacrificing a single feature of our regular table of contents. This does not mean that we have in the least changed our attitude toward serials in general. It means that one serial in particular has proved the brilliant exception to our rule. At its conclusion we will resume our present make-up and continue it until— Well, we fear it will be a long time before another "John Tremaine" comes the way of this or any other magazine.

You will find the first fourteen chapters of this splendid novel in AINSLEE'S for May.



HAVE you read the first of Albert Payson Terhune's fascinating "Stories of the Super-Women" in this issue? What is the peculiar trait that enables the siren woman to walk roughshod or trip lightly over an entire generation of hearts, or to turn whole kingdoms topsy-turvy? As Mr. Terhune points out in his foreword, it is not beauty, for Cleopatra and Rachel were not beautiful; it is not youth, for Diane de Poitiers and Ninon de l'Enclos broke hearts at sixty; nor is it wit nor daintiness nor femininity.

Perhaps some day some learned old professor will be able to discover the secret of the super-woman's charm. If he does, let him disclose it only in his will, lest some woman absolutely lacking in the quality he has found to be the true essential should kick a dainty silken slipper through his pet theories and make him ridiculous in the eyes of the world.

But whatever the secret of their power, their varied careers certainly lend to fact all the fascination of fiction. And the man best qualified to present these super-women

to us with delicacy, understanding, and fidelity to history is Mr. Terhune. Whether he is writing of Delilah and the luring of Samson, or of Adah Menken, idol of poets and pugilists, now lying in an almost forgotten grave in Brooklyn, he succeeds in imbuing them in the printed pages with something of the charm they exercised in life.

In the May number he tells us of Adrienne Lecouvreur, "the actress heart-queen," who denounced a duchess, jealous of her love for the great Saxe, from the stage of the *Comédie Française*.



THE complete novelette for the next AINSLEE's is by William Slavens McNutt, author of "A Square Peg" in the present issue. In "Bob Corrigan's Phantom Ship" he gives us a powerful romance of South America, with a hero every bit as striking as his Bill Heenan of Alaskan fame.

In the same number you will find the first of a short series of sparkling, bubbling little dialogues by Sinclair Gluck, who makes his initial appearance in AINSLEE's with this month's "For Services Rendered." While they are not in the least reminiscent, they possess something of the charm and effervescent wit of Anthony Hope's delightful "Dolly Dialogues."

Notable among the other contributions for May are "The Devil's Luck," a colorful tale of a continental gambling resort mystery; the fifth of Sandy McGrab's entertaining romances; and an appealing love story, by Eleanor Ferris.



A PHILADELPHIA newspaper man, while on the trail of an eloping couple in Tom's River, New Jersey, as he explains in a postscript, found time to write us con-

cerning the February AINSLEE's. Perhaps his letter may amuse you as much as it pleased and amused us:

"TO THE EDITOR OF AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE: You're the deuce of a man. And I'll tell you why.

"I bought a copy of the February AINSLEE's on Thursday, and took it home with me that night. I'm working on a morning newspaper, and I get through at one o'clock in the morning—and ought to go to bed then. On Saturday night, however, I showed my superlative wisdom (stage business of sneering at myself as I say these words) by picking up your — magazine before going to bed. Result: no bed till three-thirty a. m. On Sunday night I covered a big fire in the Cramp shipyards. The water from the hoses froze as it struck the ground. That's the sort of a night it was, and I tramped around in the cinders and slush till midnight. Home at two a. m., dog tired. AINSLEE's still lying on my table. Hesitated . . . picked it up . . . glanced at the first lines of its complete novel—and heard the clock strike five as I crawled into bed.

"Oh, yes, you're about as popular with me now as a splinter in a stenographer's second-finger tip.

"As an editorial reader I read manuscripts for two years for a monthly magazine that was supposed to be better than AINSLEE's—at least, we asked a quarter of a dollar for it—and if at any time we had been able to put into one issue four such stories as Edith MacVane's 'Adventurous Violet,' 'Tips,' 'My Sheridan,' and the Klondike story by McNutt, we would have raised the price to a dollar and thought we were giving it away at that.

"That's what I call editing a live magazine. *Experto crede!* Yours truly,

"S. M. C——"



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(539)

The Nabisco logo, featuring the word "NABISCO" in a stylized font with a small crown above the letter 'i'. Below the logo is a rectangular box of Nabisco Sugar Wafers, showing the brand name and decorative patterns.

NABISCO


Sugar Wafers

A stack of Nabisco Sugar Wafers is shown on a small, round, white plate with a scalloped edge. The wafers are rectangular with a decorative border and the Nabisco logo. In the background, an open box of Nabisco Sugar Wafers is visible, showing the interior compartments and the brand name.

THESE incomparable sweets are the most universally popular of all dessert confections. Whether served at dinner, afternoon tea or any social gathering, Nabisco Sugar Wafers are equally delightful and appropriate. In ten-cent tins; also in twenty-five-cent tins.

ADORA

Another dessert delight. Wafers of pleasing size and form with a bountiful confectionery filling. Another help to the hostess. In ten-cent tins.

A rectangular box of Adora wafers. The box features the word "ADORA" in a large, stylized font, with "A FILLED SUGAR WAFER CONFECTION" written below it. The box is decorated with floral patterns.

NATIONAL BISCUIT COMPANY

A stack of Adora Sugar Wafers is shown on a small, round, white plate with a scalloped edge. The wafers are rectangular with a decorative border and the Adora logo. In the background, an open box of Adora Sugar Wafers is visible, showing the interior compartments and the brand name.

The pure, sure heating!

Grandma's stories of how to be a good child are helpful. But it's far easier for little folks to grow up strong, studious, happy men and women if given opportunity to romp, study, bathe, eat and sleep in the genial, invigorating, all-through-the-house-warmth of radiator heating. To make good boys good men—to keep them away from the "lure of other places"—is largely a matter of knowing that their home is the most snug, comfy, coziest spot on earth—guaranteed so by



There is no scorched air, no ash-dust, no escaping coal- or cellar-gases to work injury to the health of the children during their vital growing period. No matter how chill and long the night, you can beat back the pinching cold and keep every cubic

AMERICAN & IDEAL RADIATORS & BOILERS

foot of your house freshly ventilated and radiantly warmed.

In many cities and states the law now compels that all newly-built schools shall be outfitted with our way of heating (all greenhouses and hospitals have long proved it to be the only perfect way).

If your child is thus wisely, sanitarily protected in school, why not adopt this right way of heating your home, since the price now rules so attractive and IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators can be so quickly and simply put into cottages, stores, churches and other structures already built. They cost no more than inferior apparatus. *Accept no substitute.*



A No. 5-10-W IDEAL Boiler and 340 sq. ft. of 38 in. AMERICAN Radiators, costing owner \$170, were used to heat this cottage. At this price the goods can be bought of any reputable, competent Fitter. This did not include cost of labor, pipe, valves, freight, etc., which are extra, and vary according to climatic and other conditions.

IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators are a substantial paying investment, as they easily will outlast the building.

Their purchase will increase the sales and rental value of the building and they will soon repay their cost in savings of fuel, labor, repairs, and in the lessened house-cleaning and saving of damage to carpets, etc. Write to-day for valuable book of heating facts, "Ideal Heating Investments." Put in the IDEAL - AMERICAN heating outfit now, while present prices are so attractive and you get the services of the most skillful fitters. Act now!

Vacuum Cleaner

Ask also for catalog of the ARCO WAND—a successful set-in-the-cellar machine with suction pipe running to each floor.



Showrooms in all large cities

AMERICAN RADIATOR COMPANY

Write Department 39
816-822 S. Michigan
Avenue, Chicago





MORNING IN THE BOIS

with scent of violet and tang of fresh young leaves in the air is always enhanced by an after-breakfast cigarette. And the cigarette is hand-made. For your true Parisian is a lover-of-living; his cigarette is a part of his *joie-de-vivre*. And for that cigarette to be perfect he puts his favorite tobacco into his favorite paper.

RIZ LA

(Pronounced: REE-LAH-KROY)

FAMOUS CIGARETTE PAPERS

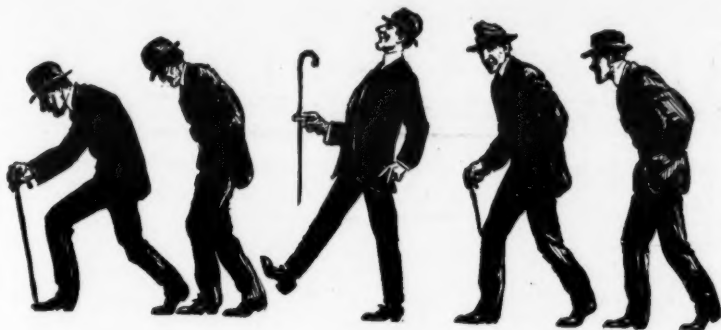
are being used the world over by fashionable men. In any company—ladies not excepted—it has become the *mode* to make up your own cigarettes, using Riz La Croix papers.

These papers are supreme because they are the perfect product of decade after decade of experimentation by the manufacturers of the La Croix family. Craftsmanship cannot form a lighter, stronger, purer, more satisfactory paper than Riz La Croix.

In cigarette papers Riz La Croix is *premier*—and all the world comes after.



FREE
An interesting illustrated booklet about RIZ LA CROIX Cigarette Papers, together with a booklet showing the best way to roll a cigarette, will be sent anywhere in U. S. on request. Address AMERICAN TOBACCO CO., 111 Fifth Ave., N. Y.



THEY slouch along, the men with the dragged-out look. They belong to the army of the sleepless. Their look is lifeless—like their work. No promotion beckons them. Sleeplessness is sapping their prospects of success.

Pick the Ostermoor sleeper! His step is brisk, like the spirit behind his work. And that spirit, which earns business position, is the result of rest, sleep—nature's conservator of energy. Each night he gets eight good hours of it. And each night he is thankful to go to his Ostermoor.

"For the rest of your life"

Ostermoor[®] \$15.

"Built—Not Stuffed" Mattress

Ostermoor mattresses help sleep through the absolute, smooth content they give; and the millions of Ostermoor sleepers know that this is so.

An Ostermoor *never* starts you on the *habit of sleeplessness* by waking you *that first time*—through *any* discomfort. Ostermoor Mattresses don't lump, don't mat, don't seam nor retain body hollows like inferior stuffed mattresses, for the reason that Ostermoors are "built—not stuffed"—with thousands of layers of soft, body-contenting cotton. Thus Ostermoors have *elasticity*—seem as if made on some soft springs. Their layers are proof against moisture; and dust can't lodge in them or vermin populate.

MATTRESSES COST

Express Prepaid

4 ft. 6 in. wide by 6 ft. 3 in. long—	
A.C.A. Ticking, 45 lbs.....	\$15.00
Satin Finish Ticking, 45 lbs.....	16.50
Mercerized Art Twills, 45 lbs.....	18.00
Special Hotel Style, 50 lbs.....	23.00
Extra Thick French Edge, 60 lbs.....	30.00
Special Imperial Edge, 60 lbs.....	35.00
Ex. Thick Imperial Edge, 70 lbs.....	45.00
Imperial Double Stitched	
French Roll, 80 lbs.....	55.00
Mattresses in two parts, 50c extra.	
Smaller sizes cost \$1 less each size.	

An occasional sun-bath is enough to keep an Ostermoor happy for thirty or more years. Letters from Ostermoor sleepers—reproduced in our FREE "Test of Time" Book—*prove* this.

Send for that FREE Book, "The Test of Time"

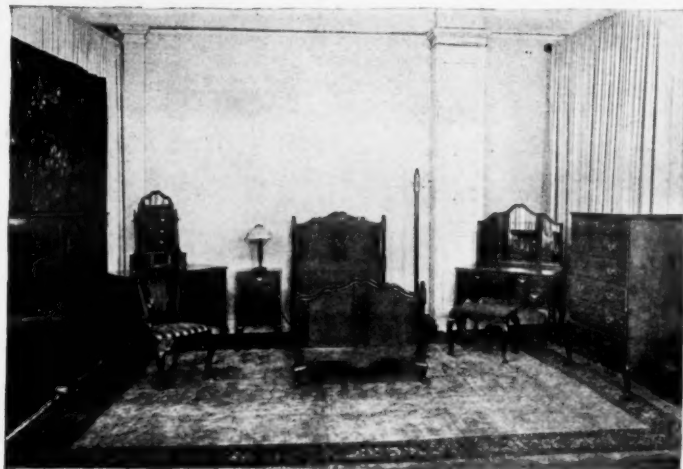
It is generously illustrated—it has 144 pages—costs nothing—teaches lots about sleep comfort. *You can sleep, too!* Mattress will be sent to you, *express prepaid*, same day we get your check or money order. Your money will be returned without question if dissatisfied at the end of 30 days. Mattresses packed in leatherette paper and burlap. Fully protected. The Ostermoor trade mark is on end of the genuine. See that it is there—or don't buy.

OSTERMOOR & CO., 174 Elizabeth Street, New York

Canadian Agency: Alaska Feather and Down Co., Ltd., Montreal



TIFFANY® STUDIOS



QUEEN ANNE BEDROOM SET.

THOSE WHO ARE CONTEMPLATING BUILDINGS OR CHANGING THE DECORATIONS AND FURNISHINGS OF THEIR HOMES WILL BE INTERESTED IN OUR BOOK ON DECORATIONS AND FURNISHINGS, WHICH DESCRIBES AND ILLUSTRATES THE WORK OF VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS OF THE STUDIOS. OUR DECORATORS ARE PREPARED TO SUGGEST SIMPLE OR ELABORATE DECORATIVE SCHEMES AND REQUEST THE OPPORTUNITY OF CONSULTING THOSE INTERESTED IN INTERIOR WORK OF ALL KINDS, INCLUDING CABINET WORK, FURNITURE, SPECIAL LIGHTING FIXTURES, ANTIQUE AND TIFFANY RUGS, LEADED GLASS AND EXCLUSIVE SELECTIONS OF IMPORTED HANGINGS.

TIFFANY® STUDIOS

347-355 MADISON AVE., COR. 45TH ST., NEW YORK CITY.

CHICAGO OFFICE, ORCHESTRA BUILDING - BOSTON OFFICE, LAWRENCE BUILDING.

Romances of Modern Business

THE American romance is in the large office-buildings and the marts of trade; it is the romance of great achievements in commerce, in industrial leadership. And it is a wonderful romance! The child of the world's nations is leading them!—ARNOLD BENNETT.

CHAPTER III

The Story of the "57 Varieties"

THE big clock boomed the hour of noon. Where there had been quiet among the diligent workers, there now broke a wave of conversation. The doors were flung open and into the green courtyard passed the hundreds of employees in playful mood.

They made a gladsome picture—these vigorous men and women, with their buoyancy and apparent content with their lot, seeking to make the most of their midday recreation with laughter and healthful exercise. A visitor to the plant with his host turned to take in the view, and then, above, beheld another sight that compelled interest.

At a window, on the second floor of one of the main buildings, stood a man looking upon the scene in the courtyard with a benevolent smile. He was an elderly man, with a face subtly merging the qualities of power and tenderness. Intently he watched the employees at play. "Whose is the 'face at the window'?" was asked.

"That," replied the host, "is Mr. H. J. Heinz, the founder of the company."

During the forenoon, there had been unfolded to the visitor the history of the "House of Heinz"—for that is the scene and subject of this story—and in it the founder of this significant industry stood out an heroic figure. A truly romantic story it was, blending the elements of sentiment and the dramatic action of big achievements. The deft hand of Arnold Bennett could make of it a romance worthy of the name.

The man who stood at the window controls an industry that has a main plant at Pittsburgh

occupying one hundred and sixty city lots and fourteen branch factories in different parts of the United States, with others in Canada, England, and Spain. He employs over five thousand hands in his factories alone and distributes his products through his own agencies and branch houses in all the principal nations of the world.

Forty-five years ago this same man began preparing and selling food products, but under very different conditions. A small room in a house at Sharpsburg, Pennsylvania, and an adjoining garden of about half an acre were the setting for the first scene of the industrial spectacle of the "House of Heinz." Here Mr. Heinz began his business career by raising horseradish, and in the single room he put it up for the local trade.

Consider this mighty transition! To the accomplishment of it there must have been brought some force besides the fineness of the products and the integrity of the business management.

Mr. M. S. Achenbach, advertising manager for the H. J. Heinz Company, named the third of the trinity of supports of the Heinz stronghold when he said: "The success of the Heinz Company has been in no uncertain degree made possible by the character and extent of the company's advertising."

It will be remembered that the vital advertising campaign which early established the "57 Varieties" in the public mind was carried on in the periodicals of national circulation.

The little room and plot of garden at Sharpsburg yielded an inspiration; but this small

The Story of the "57 Varieties"

foundation could not long serve the purposes of a man with the will to build a large structure. Mr. Heinz expanded his operations to fruits and vegetables. Soon he had established such a lucrative local trade that he decided the scope of Sharpsburg was too limited for his enterprise. So, in the early seventies, the Heinz plant was moved to Pittsburgh.

Here again the words of Mr. Achenbach are pertinent: "The local success after the establishment of the plant in Pittsburgh was great," he said; "the Heinz products found a ready market and a continuing demand. But it did not take the young manufacturer long to discover that no matter how superior his product might be, unless he spread the knowledge of that goodness to a wider territory, he should always remain a local manufacturer. So he began to advertise."

The founder of the "House of Heinz" had an ambition to create a world-wide demand for his products. In those early days, before the efficacy of high-powered advertising had been demonstrated, this was regarded as a dream. But the Heinz dream has reached a dramatic fulfillment.

All this was accomplished by a broadly gauged advertising appeal. The foundation was laid through the weekly and monthly periodicals of national circulation. Later, the firm used practically every kind of medium that would make for universality of advertising. The response lifted the Heinz Company from a local Pittsburgh concern to an industry of international proportions.

The Heinz Company believed in the persistency of advertising, and this, with the originality of the company's advertising ideas, has had a telling effect. Who is there not familiar with the small green-pickle trade-mark or the sign of the "57 Varieties"?

The green-pickle trade-mark was adopted soon after Mr. Heinz began advertising in the magazines. Later he saw the psychological appeal of a popular catch-phrase. None that came to his attention seemed just what he wanted until he noticed a sign in a New York shoe-dealer's window. It read: "Twenty styles."

"Why," thought he, "can I not advertise the number of my products?" He drew out a memorandum-book and counted the items in the list of foods manufactured by him. There

were fifty-seven. "How can I word this?" he mused, "'styles' will not do for a food term; 'kinds' does not sound right; fifty-seven, fifty-seven—varieties!" The thought came to him in a flash. And so the term, "57 Varieties," was started on its history-making career in the food world.

Mr. Achenbach has some interesting things to say about the Heinz advertising ideals. Hear him further: "The business of the H. J. Heinz Company is an example of the possibilities of modern commercial evolution. It is simply the logical result of fitting an idea to public demand and sticking conscientiously to its purpose of fulfilment.

"Through the national magazines we have commanded a national business. This afterward was supplemented by the results from other media of advertising. The Heinz Company feels that the magazines have been a force in developing a demand for and a confidence in Heinz products. The ethical standards of the magazines with regard to their advertising are in harmony with our own ideals, and have assisted us materially in creating the public confidence that we now enjoy."

A great industrial success such as that of the H. J. Heinz Company is another vivid illustration of the power of the magazines in working hand-in-hand with an industry in its development. A product is advertised in a standard magazine; that message from the manufacturer penetrates every section of the country, carrying with it the accepted suggestion that the product advertised must be "right" or it would not be represented in the magazine. Such is the present-day view of magazine advertising.

There is another phase of the mission of the periodical advertisement of equal importance with its ethical and commercial values. That is its accomplishments in the field of public service. The one instance of the Heinz Company is eloquent of this. The creating of a demand for Heinz products has set new food standards; has given employment to thousands of people; has made a market for the products of some thirty thousand acres of land; has conserved the food supply, and has relieved the housewives of the world of many cares. Many the woman that has blessed Heinz when an unexpected guest arrived!

The Oblong Rubber Button

found only on

Velvet Grip
Hose Supporter,

Look for yellow band.

Velvet Grip

ONLONG RUBBER BUTTON
HOSE SUPPORTER

also has the Hump-Loop and Cloth-Covered Base adding greatly to ease and comfort, and will not cause drop stitches.

Made in Many Styles for Misses and Women.

SOLD EVERYWHERE.

Child's Sample Pair 16 cents (give age.)
Women's, 25c. postpaid.

GEORGE FROST CO.
MAKERS, BOSTON.



The TRAINED Man Has Money

But it's different with the untrained man. He often finds the pocketbook empty with the landlord, grocer, butcher, and baker clamoring for their money.

It's a serious problem—this *big* spending and *little* earning. But if you go about it right you can easily earn far more than you spend.

The only difference between YOU and the man who earns a big salary is training—SPECIAL TRAINING—and this you can easily acquire through the practical home study courses of the International Correspondence Schools

You don't have to leave home or give up your position. The I.C.S. have trained thousands of men for better jobs right in their own homes after working hours. They can do the same for YOU.

Just mark and mail the attached coupon. And the I.C.S. will show you how they can make you an expert in the line of work you want to follow.

Mark and Mail the Coupon—Today.

CELESTINS

VICHY

Owned by and bottled under the direct control of the French Government

Natural Alkaline Water



Your Physician will recommend its use, to relieve

**INDIGESTION
RHEUMATISM
URIC ACID
GOUT**

Not Genuine without the word

CELESTINS

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

Box 1199 SCRANTON, PA.

Explains, without any obligation on my part, how I can qualify for the position before which I mark X.

Salesmanship	Civil Service
Electrical Engineering	Bookkeeping
Electric Lighting Supt.	Stenography & Typewriting
Telephone Expert	Window Trimming
Architect	Show-Card Writing
Building Contractor	Lettering & Sign Painting
Architectural Draftsman	Advertising
Structural Engineer	Commercial Illustrating
Concrete Construction	Industrial Designing
Mechanical Engineer	Commercial Law
Mechanical Draftsman	Automobile Running
Civil Engineer	English Branches
Mine Superintendent	Poultry Farming
Stationary Engineer	Teacher
Plumbing & Steam Fitting	Agriculture
Gas Engines	Chemist
	Spanish
	French
	German

Name _____
Present Employer _____
Street and No. _____
City _____ State _____

Good Humor is a Species
of Good Health. Good health re-
sults from drinking

Evans' Ale

IT is one of the great helps to better living because it provides better drinking. An ideal tonic for the jaded man or woman—one that works wonders on mind and body. It relaxes the nerves, soothes the stomach, delights the palate and strengthens the body. A mighty fine drink at all times. Try it at home.

There's Evans' Stout too

Sold in Bottles and Splits. Apply to nearest dealer or write to

C. H. EVANS & SONS Estab. 1786 Hudson, N.Y.



Immense Profits Possible For You

from a small investment in Texas Oil Lands. \$10 buys a fine building lot 25 x 125 feet—clear warranty deed title, also gives the lot owners 40% of the oil profits from any wells found in the entire

Sea View Oil Land Subdivision

in Jefferson County, Texas

The owner is selling these lots solely to raise money to drill wells and operate in Texas Gulf Coast Oil Belt where immense profits are being made from small investments.

This is a fair, square offer—no chance to lose as you own a good lot and have a chance for big profits when oil is struck and as the prospecting and drilling for wells costs you nothing. Write today for full particulars to

JAMES LA GRO & CO.

1527 First National Bank Building, Chicago



DO YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW TO DEVELOP VITALITY, ENERGY, ENDURANCE, NERVE STRENGTH, MUSCULAR STRENGTH, PERFECT PHYSIQUE?

My FREE BOOKS, "The 'Whys' of Exercise" and "The First and Last Law of Physical Culture," tell you, if you are weak or underdeveloped, how to grow strong; if strong, how to grow stronger. They explain how to develop lungs and muscle, the strong heart and vigorous digestion—in short, how to improve health and strength internally as well as externally. Send TO-DAY—NOW—for these FREE BOOKS. Enclose 4c in stamps to cover postage.

PROF. H. W. TITUS,

Department 82, 636 and 56 Cooper Square, New York City

MULLINS STEEL BOATS CAN'T SINK

Safe as a life boat—Cannot warp or rot—No seams to leak—Cost but a coat of paint to keep in commission—Guaranteed absolutely against puncture. The easiest boat to row and to keep its course—ideal for recreation or livery. Write for Catalog of Motor Boats, Row Boats, Hunting and Fishing Boats and Canoes.

THE W. H. MULLINS CO.
406 Franklin St., Salem, O., U. S. A.
The World's Largest Boat Builders.

Cost Less—Last Longer—than Wood Boats



We Ship on Approval

without a cent deposit, prepay the freight and allow

10 DAYS FREE TRIAL on every bicycle. IT ONLY

COSTS one cent to learn our unheard of prices and

marvelous offers on highest grade 1914 models.

Do not buy a bicycle or

FACTORY PRICES a pair of tires from any-

where at any price until you write for our new large Art

Catalog and learn our wonderful proposition on the first

sample bicycle going to your town.

RIDER AGENTS everywhere are making big

money exhibiting and selling

our bicycles. We sell cheaper than any other factory.

TIRES, Coaster—Brake rear wheels, lamps,

caps and sundries at half usual prices. Do Not Wait!

Write today for our latest special offer on "Ranger" bicycles.

MEAD CYCLE CO. Dept. D-110 CHICAGO

The box is the great-
est novelty in the
cigarette business,
and is made just
like the expensive
gold cases.

The
distinctive
cigarette
in the
distinctive
box.



Bud Cigarettes

20c. per package. Plain or Cork Tip. Made of Selected Pure Turkish Tobacco with a distinctive individual blend which is appreciated by smokers of discrimination and taste.

Ask your dealer for BUD CIGARETTES. If he doesn't keep them send \$2.00 for 10 packages (100 cigarettes). Sent prepaid to any address. You'll be glad we asked you to smoke them.

BUD CIGARETTE CO., 2 Rector St., NEW YORK CITY

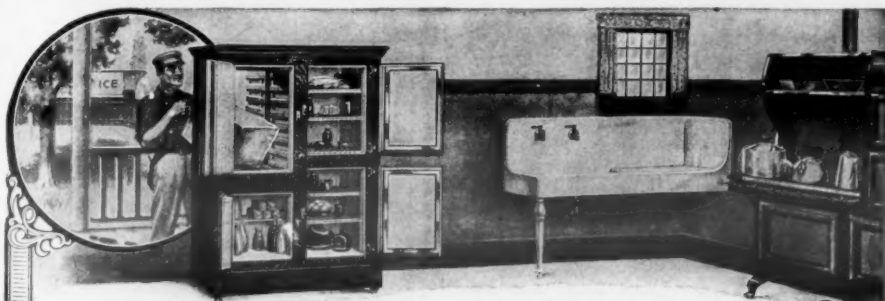
Milo

The EGYPTIAN CIGARETTE of QUALITY



If you prefer Plain Ends ask for the Milo Red Box

Cork Tips in the Milo Yellow Label Box



Keep The Iceman Outside!

With a McCray Refrigerator arranged with an outside door for icing from the rear porch, the iceman and his muddy tracks and bother are kept outside. It's much nicer and more convenient.

McCray Sanitary Refrigerators

are built in a great variety of styles and sizes for every requirement of Residences, Hotels, Clubs, Restaurants, Public Institutions, etc. They were chosen by the U. S. Pure Food Laboratories in preference to all others.

The McCray has a perfect circulation of pure, cold, dry air that keeps foods fresh, healthful, and free from taint. Its scientific insulation economizes ice. Sanitary, easily cleaned linings of opal glass—porcelain, white enamel or odorless white wood. A great variety of stock sizes ready for immediate shipment.

Write for Free Catalog that explains the McCray Patented System and gives full information.

No. 91—Regular Sizes for Residences
No. 50—for Hotels, Clubs Institutions

No. 89—for Grocers
No. A. H. Built-to-Order for Residences

No. 73—for Florists
No. 60—for Meat Markets

MCCRAY REFRIGERATOR COMPANY, 635 Lake Street, Kendallville, Ind.
New York, McCray Bldg., 7-9 W. 30th Street. Chicago, 158 N. Wabash Avenue
For branch salesrooms in other cities see your local telephone directory.

Make This a Canoe Summer

Warm days and moonlit nights are coming, with picturesque streams and placid lakes for you to explore. Get the prettiest of nature's views—get solitude, pleasure and rest—get an



"Old Town Canoe"

Staunch, swift, safe—graceful designs. Send for our catalogue and learn all about canoes. 4,000 in stock. Agents everywhere.

OLD TOWN CANOE CO.

124 Main St., Old Town, Maine, U. S. A.



See Yourself in Motion Pictures

A New Invention

ENABLES YOU TO MAKE and SHOW

Motion Pictures of yourself, family, friends, sports, travels, or anything that interests you.

FOR PLEASURE OR PROFIT

As easy to work as a kodak.

Price, **\$39.00**

Cash or Easy Payments

Your old camera taken in trade.



Send for descriptive catalogue A.

A 400-page book, 86 illustrations—free with each camera.

MOTION PICTURE CAMERA CO., Inc., 5 West 14th Street, NEW YORK

Importers and Mfrs. of motion picture apparatus

BOUND VOLUMES of AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE now ready. **PRICE \$1.50** per volume. Address Subscription Department, STREET & SMITH, 79-89 Seventh Avenue, NEW YORK CITY



RIDER AGENTS WANTED

In each town to ride and exhibit sample 1913 model. Write for Special Offer. Finest.

Guaranteed 1914 Models **\$10 to \$27**

with Coaster-Brakes and Puncture-Proof Tires.

1913 and 1912 Models **\$7 to \$12**

ALL OF BEST MAKES.....

100 Second-Hand Wheels

All makes and models, good as new.

Great Factory Clearing Sale. **\$3 to \$8**

We ship on Approval without a cent deposit, pay the

10 Days' Free Trial

Freights to allow

TIRES coaster-brake wheels, lamps, and sundries, half usual prices. **DO NOT**

MEAD CYCLE CO. Dept. D-110 CHICAGO



Flash Like Genuine
DIAMONDS
at 1/50 the cost—in solid gold rings
WHEN YOU BUY A BARODA

do not think of it as an imitation diamond; think of it as it is—a Genuine Mined Gem with a hardness, lustre and environment that classes it with a genuine diamond. It answers every quality you require—brilliance, lasting qualities, hardness and perfect cut—so let us send you one of these bargain G. O. D. returnable in 3 days, if unsatisfactory. Ladies' Tiffany style 14 K Solid Gold ring, 1 carat stone, \$3.98; Men's ring, \$6.98; stud or pin, \$4.98. Our catalogue shows full line. Enclose 10c for ring measure.

BARODA CO., Dept. K20 4711 N. Clark St., CHICAGO

"AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE is becoming more popular with every issue. It presents fiction of a most entertaining nature—the kind which appeals to discriminating readers."—Argus, Montpelier, Vt.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

Your News Dealer

maintains his store at considerable expense. He must pay for help, rent and lighting. He carries many articles that you would never dream of ordering direct from manufacturers, and is, therefore, of great service when you need a newspaper, a cigar or a box of stationery. Then why not give him all of your custom and so help make his business profitable?

Tell him to show you samples of AINSLEE'S, POPULAR, SMITH'S, PEOPLE'S, NEW STORY and TOP-NOTCH magazines. Select those you want and he will gladly deliver them to your residence regularly.

Then, when you want something good to read, you will not have to search for it.

STREET & SMITH, Publishers, New York



YOU CAN MAKE CIGARETTES LIKE THESE

A Practical Novelty for Cigarette Smokers

TURKO CIGARETTE ROLLER

Sent postpaid for **25cts.** Address,

Turko Roller Co., P. O. Box 1263, New York

**Special
BARGAIN
SALE**

**"EVERYBODY'S DOING IT"—BUYING
DIAMONDS, WATCHES, JEWELRY, on CREDIT
YOU SAVE ONE-THIRD**

**Diamonds
Watches
on Credit**

Send for FREE
Jewelry
Catalog

(Established 1858)
STORES ALSO IN:
PITTSBURGH
ST. LOUIS
CHICAGO

These are our Big Leaders—always fashionable, always worn by lovers of artistic jewelry. Let us send you any of these handsome pieces, or any article shown in our Catalog, for your examination and approval, all delivery charges prepaid by us. If satisfactory, send us one-fifth of purchase price as first payment, balance in eight equal amounts, payable monthly.
No. 529-Diamond Ring, "The Young Man's Favorite," 6-prong "Tooth" mounting, 14k solid gold, \$45
No. 531-Diamond Ring, the famous Loftis "Perfection" mounting, 14k solid gold, \$45
No. 625-LaValiere, solid gold, 1 Diamond, 4 whole Pearls, 2 Sapphires, with 15in. chain. Our best seller, \$25
Our handsome 116-page Catalog, illustrating over 2,000 bargains, is sent free on request. All the new, popular styles in jewelry—gorgeously beautiful Diamonds, Artistic solid gold and platinum mountings—exquisite things—that sell in some cash stores at almost double our prices. Our Easy Credit Plan is fully explained in Catalog. Send for it today. IT IS FREE.
LOFTIS BROS. & CO., Diamonds, Watches etc.
Dept. M-843 100 to 108 N. State Street, CHICAGO, ILL.



**YOU
CAN
BUILD
THIS
BOAT**



We send you all parts cut, shaped and fitted—you simply put them together following clear directions. It's simple and easy. Write for Brooks Boat Book. See illustrations of Cruisers, Power Boats, Sail Boats, Canoes of all kinds—that you can build. Also new "V" Bottom. Full size patterns alone, \$2 up. Only \$33 buys knocked down frame for 23 footer—free boat book tells all. Write today.

BROOKS MANUFACTURING CO.

5004 Rust Ave.

Saginaw, Mich.

**You Can Weigh
Exactly What
You Should**

You can—I know you can,

because I have reduced 32,000 women and have built up that many more—scientifically, naturally, without drugs, in the privacy of their own rooms.

**You Can Be
So Well!**

—if you only knew how well! I build up your vitality—at the same time I strengthen your heart action; teach you how to breathe, to stand, walk and relieve such ailments as

**Nervousness, Torpid
Liver, Constipation,
Indigestion, Etc.**

One pupil writes: "I weigh 88 pounds less, and I have gained wonderfully in strength." Another says: "Last May I weighed 100 pounds, this May I weigh 120 and oh! I feel SO WELL."

Won't you sit down and write now for my FREE booklet. Don't wait, you may forget it. I have had a wonderful experience and I should like to tell you about it.

Susanna Cocroft

Dept. 34 624 Michigan Boulevard, CHICAGO

Miss Cocroft is a college bred woman. She is the recognized authority on the scientific care of the health and figure of women.



**Prof. L. HUBERT'S
MALVINA
CREAM**
"The One Reliable
Beautifier"
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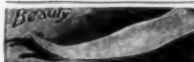
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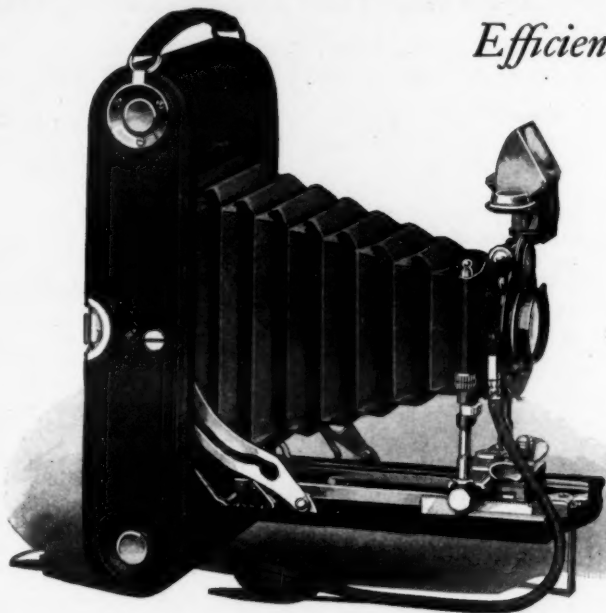
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